

Harry Potter and The Acts of Betrayal

Chapter One – Runaway Bride

She ran through the darkened streets. They had been waiting for her at her home. This had become a test of who knew the neighborhood better, someone who grew up here, or someone who occasionally patrolled the area. A long range stunning curse flew past her head as she ducked into an alley. At least they were still throwing stunners. They still wanted her alive. Why not? Dead she was worth nothing.

Terror filled her soul, but her mind was working, making associations, considering possibilities, plotting her path. Idea, reflection, decision. She saw a possibility for escape and ducked through the open gate.

The Wilkins were a Muggle family with 4 boys, all mad for sport. Their back garden should have something she could use. There. Perfect. She picked up the cricket bat and waited at the gate for her pursuers. She had no chance against them as a witch, but all three of them were clueless about all things Muggle. If she could take out the leader she stood a chance.

The three minutes she waited seemed like hours, but finally the gate latch lifted, the gate eased opened and a wand slowly came into view. She swung the bat with all her might and connected hard. Whomever she had hit fell to the ground with a soft moan. She swung and connected again. The Moaning stopped. She reached down and grasped the invisibility cloak, pulling it from the still form at her feet.

“Hullo Nymphadora.” She whispered. “One would have thought your daddy would have taught you to play Muggle

games like hide and seek better than this.” The girl picked up the unconscious Auror’s wand, and waved it a complicated pattern, while silently mouthing a hex. The Auror’s face became instantly disfigured by a series of close-set purple pustules that had spread across her nose and cheeks to form the word RAPIST“Lets see if your shape changing can get around this little hex.”

She threw the recently liberated invisibility cloak over her shoulders, pocketed her newly acquired untrackable wand into a pocket and vanished from view. It was time to go to ground. Time to vanish. Revenge would be hers against those who had used her. The Wizarding World was about to get a lesson in the folly it was to cross Hermione Granger.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry Potter was having a very nice dream. A very naked Ginny Weasley was doing all sorts of kind and pleasant things to him. His dream self reached to cup her dream breasts and they felt... odd. At times they were hard like a half cocanut, other times soft like a water filled balloon. His rational self’s explanation for this was that he did not actually know what a woman’s breast felt like. His dream self told his rational self to shut the hell up and let him get on with the fantasy, and suggested that the rational self get the hell off his ass and get that information as soon as possible so as to provide better, more realistic dreams.

So of course, his rational self pointed out that he was doing the best he could with what he had to work with, what with his moral self screwing everything up every time an opportunity presented its self. Morality interjected that the two of them were acting like children, and that as long as they were under a death threat there was no reason to put

the feelings of another at risk by being associated with them, as nice as a tryst with a pleasantly naked girl like Ginny Weasley might be.

As usual, his compassionate self was staying out of the argument. He was concerned with the outside world; these internal disputes were not in his brief.

Through out the argument Ginny had stood there staring at the group of bickering Harry's looking slightly amused. She then approached the four of them and (somehow, it wasn't clear how she managed it with only two hands) placed her right hand over all of their mouths and whispered "Harry!"

His rational self remarked that it was odd that Ginny was speaking in Hermione's voice. His dream self announced that having Hermione here would be a very good idea indeed and a very naked Hermione appeared beside Ginny. Then the girls kissed.

His rational self no longer found Ginny speaking with Hermione's voice to be worth comment. His Dream self was over the moon considering the possibilities, his moral self was trying to scream bloody murder, but Ginny's hand on his mouth made that impossible, and his compassionate self was busily trying to ignore the entire situation.

"Harry, wake up." Whispered Ginny in Hermione's voice despite the lip lock the two girls were sharing."

Hell said his rational self. This is real. Hermione is waking us up. Dream self screamed his rage at the loss of his dream state.

"ermi? What?" he said against her hand.

She maintained the pressure. "Harry, you've got to wake up. We've got to get out of here."

...---ooo000ooo---...

Twenty minutes, three apparitions and a minor case of breaking and entry later, Harry was staring at Hermione waiting for an explanation. It never occurred to him to get the explanation before they left. She had saved his life too many times for him to question her.

"What's going on Hermione?"

She hesitated. How could she tell him this? "Harry, do you recall last year on the ride on the Express? Do you remember what we said to each other.

"Of course I do Hermione. I meant it at the time, but we didn't work out..." He blinked. Why did we break up? When did we break up? "You fell for Ron, and I fell for Ginny, we stayed friends.

"Do you remember when you started noticing Ginny?"

"I don't know, not long after you and Ron got together, one day she was kissing Dean in the common room and then I felt like I was going to..."

"You were going to kill him." She saw the look in his eyes. "The same way I felt when I saw Ron and Lavender."

"I was so angry, at him, not her. I knew he wasn't good enough, I was just raging, You remember. Then she kissed me, and I calmed down. It's funny I've only kissed three girls.

Cho was all salty and wet, you were just, well lovely, but Ginny, hers are everything; they take my whole mind and just stun it. Her kisses taste like”

“Strawberrys.”

He blinked. “How did you know? Have you...”

“No Harry, Ron’s kisses taste like strawberrys.”

“They do? Is it a family thing?”

“No Harry, it’s a potion thing.”

Chapter Two – The Way We Were

“Do you remember when you started noticing Ginny?”

“I don’t know, not long after you and Ron got together, one day she was kissing Dean in the common room and then I felt like I was going to...”

“You were going to kill him.” She saw the look in his eyes. “The same way I felt when I saw Ron and Lavender.”

“I was so angry, at him, not her. I knew he wasn’t good enough, I was just raging, you remember. Then she kissed me, and I calmed down. It’s funny I’ve only kissed three girls. Cho was all salty and wet, you were just, well lovely, but Ginny, hers are everything; they take my whole mind and just stun it. Her kisses taste like”

“Strawberries.”

He blinked. “How did you know? Have you...”

“No Harry, Ron’s kisses taste like strawberries.”

“They do? Is it a family thing?”

“No Harry, it’s a potion thing.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry:

September 1st 1996.

I stared out the window of the Hogwarts express, depressed more than I could ever remember being. My attitude had kept the others away. Neville and Luna had come in for a while, but left when I wouldn't talk to them. Over the summer with the Dursleys I had made the decision to at least try and talk to her, but she was with Ron at the Prefect meeting.

With Ron. She was always with Ron. She spent the last part of the summer with Ron. The letters from Ron and from Hermione quickly became letters from Ron and Hermione. She would write the letters, full of news of the Burrow, her parents and of Ron. Ron would add his scrawl to the bottom with something about the Chudley Cannons.

Damn Ron Weasley anyway. He always had everything. Parents who loved him, brothers to help him, a sister to help. And now, Hermione. He had Hermione too. He always complained about not having money. Ron had no idea how rich he was. He had no idea how I envied him.

Hermione stormed into the compartment, slamming her self into the seat across from me, her brown eyes blazing.

"What's wrong Hermione?"

"Nothing, everything's just fine."

"If this is fine," I said, reaching to take her hand. "I don't want to see you angry. Talk to me Hermione, what's wrong?"

"Ron."

"What did he do?"

“He pushed me into a corner, put his hand on my breast and kissed me. He said since I stayed with his family at the Burrow, I was his girlfriend now.”

“Ron did that?”

She pulled her hand from my grasp and the look she gave me told me that questioning her was not the way to ensure living long enough for Voldemort to kill me. I started to feel very stupid.

“I thought you were his girlfriend now. Your letters from the Burrow sounded like you were. I can’t believe Ron would grope you like that. Want me to hex him?”

“I’ve taken care of that. He won’t be sitting comfortably for quite a while.”

I nodded. “Would you like to be alone? I can find somewhere else to sit.”

“No Harry. I’m sorry. I can’t believe Ron did that either.”

“So he’s not your boyfriend?”

That got me another filthy look. I ignored it and soldiered on.
“Would you like one?”

“What?” she looked completely gobsmacked. A novel expression for the smartest witch of our age.

“Would you like a boyfriend?”

“That would depend on who this theoretical boyfriend might be. Who did you have in mind?”

“Me.” I said almost silently. “I wouldn’t touch you like that. Ever.”

Again, she was startled. “Are you asking me to be your girlfriend?”

“Yes.” I smiled. “You would have to make allowances for my general cluelessness and being emotionally stunted. But, yes I am.”

“We’re friends Harry.” She explained. Evidently I’m an idiot.

“I thought that a friend would be the best choice for a girlfriend. Are you saying I should be asking out one of the Slytherin girls?” She looked a little startled at the idea. “Is the relationship better if you have to dodge getting a knife in the back while you’re snogging?”

“No, I mean, why me? You could do better than me.” Those big brown eyes bore into my soul.

“Better than you? You would have to point her out; I don’t know the girl you’re talking about.”

“There are any number of rich purebloods who would welcome your attention Harry.”

“I’m still waiting for you to tell me which one is better than you. I don’t care about rich, my parents left me more money than I know what to do with, and Sirius made it worse. I don’t give a good god damn about blood status. I know what girl I want to be with. I asked her when she told me that she didn’t have a boy friend.”

“But I’m not even pretty.”

“No you’re not.” Her eyes burned into mine. “You are far beyond merely being pretty Hermione, you are beautiful.”

I’d blown it. She didn’t believe me. How could she look in a mirror and not see how beautiful she was?

“Yes”

“Yes? Yes what?”

“Yes, I’d like to be your girlfriend.”

I couldn’t believe my luck; I just sat there with my mouth open.

“Traditionally, my saying yes would mean we kiss.”

Kiss? Oh hell. What I didn’t know about relationships would fill several books. All I knew about kissing came from seeing what Aunt Petunia did with Uncle Vernon, and the wet mouth pressing Cho used on me. Suspecting that Hermione didn’t want to be cried on, I moved over to her side, leaned forward and pressed my closed lips against hers.

“Honestly Harry, I think we can do better than that.” Then, as in so many other subjects Hermione showed me what I was doing wrong. “Open your mouth Harry.” Then she kissed me, our tongues touched, and suddenly I couldn’t stand up comfortably.

We sat side by side for the rest of the ride, hand in hand. Ron came by and gave me a filthy look, then left without saying a word.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione:

September 1st 1996.

The beginning of term Prefects meeting was exactly what I expected. There was a short orientation of the responsibilities of a prefect by the Head Boy and Girl, specifically targeted at those who had yet to read the Prefect's Handbook. I had read it, committing the important parts to memory, but still took notes. It would be important to know the things that the Heads considered most important. Then the meeting was over, and Ron and I were assigned the first of the patrols.

We made the transit of the train. Stopping in on groups of first years to welcome them and let them know to speak to a prefect if they needed help. Stopping a few minor tussles between students, we were in the last carriage but one when Ron pulled me into the lavatory. He pushed me up against the door from the inside and covered my mouth with his, running his tongue around in my mouth. I was too shocked at this to react; he must have taken my inaction for permission and grabbed my breast, and ground his pelvis against mine. I felt his excitement against my thigh.

I recovered from the shock and drove my knee into his crotch, just the way Daddy taught me. I could still hear his instructions 'Ring his chimes, you'll have his attention. If he's just a kid who got carried away, that should be enough. If he's a bastard taking what you didn't offer, keep kicking until his testicles come out his nose.' I decided that Ron had just

gotten carried away, and glared at him where he lay on the floor.

“What did you do that for?” he gasped, holding his damaged bits in obvious pain.

“No one gropes me. What the hell did you think you were doing?” I had never been so angry at him.

“We spent half the summer together at my house. You’re my girlfriend.”

“I WAS your friend Ron Weasley. I was never and never will be your Girlfriend.”

I left him on the floor of the lav and went to the last compartment in the last carriage. Harry was there alone, looking lost. I entered the cabin and sat on the seat across from him. His green eyes bore into me. He has such wonderful eyes; you could almost swim in them. I don’t think he knew what those eyes did to women.

“What’s wrong Hermione?” he asked.

“Nothing, everything’s just fine.” No sense worrying him about Ron.

“If this is fine, “He reached across the aisle and took my hand. “I don’t want to see you angry. Talk to me Hermione, what’s wrong?”

“Ron.”

“What did he do?”

“He pushed me into a corner, put his hand on my breast and kissed me. He said since I stayed with his family at the Burrow, I was his girlfriend now.” There, it was said.

“Ron did that?”

He doubted me? Did he really think I would lie about this?

“I thought you were his girlfriend now.” He said, “Your letters from the Burrow sounded like you were. I can’t believe Ron would grope you like that. Want me to hex him?”

“I’ve taken care of that. He won’t be sitting comfortably for quite a while.”

He nodded. “Would you like to be alone? I can find somewhere else to sit.”

Don’t leave me! I screamed inside my head “No Harry. I’m sorry. I can’t believe Ron did that either.”

“So he’s not your boyfriend?”

I glared at him. He ignored it. “Would you like one?”

“What?”

“Would you like a boyfriend?”

“That would depend on who this theoretical boyfriend might be. Who did you have in mind?” Is he going to try and set me up with Neville?

“Me.” He said quietly, as if he expected me to laugh at him. “I wouldn’t touch you like that. Ever.”

Was he asking me to...“Are you asking me to be your girlfriend?”

“Yes.” He smiled shyly. “You would have to make allowances for my general cluelessness and being emotionally stunted. But, yes I am.”

“We’re friends Harry.” Did we dare risk what we had?

“I thought that a friend would be the best choice for a girlfriend. Are you saying I should be asking out one of the Slytherin girls?” He didn’t understand what I was saying. “Is the relationship better if you have to dodge getting a knife in the back while you’re snogging?”

“No, I mean, why me? You could do better than me.” I knew he could, I’d thought this out before. I’d heard other girls talking about him.

“Better than you? You would have to point her out; I don’t know the girl you’re talking about.”

“There are any number of rich purebloods who would welcome your attention Harry.”

“I’m still waiting for you to tell me which one is better than you. I don’t care about rich, my parents left me more money than I know what to do with, and Sirius made it worse. I don’t give a good god damn about blood status. I know what girl I want to be with. I asked her when she told me that she didn’t have a boy friend.”

“But I’m not even pretty.”

“No you’re not.” I knew it, but hadn’t thought he would confirm it. “You are far beyond merely being pretty Hermione, you are beautiful.”

Harry thought I was beautiful? He was just saying it; he couldn’t possibly mean that, could he? If he meant it, then yes. I would accept his offer.

“Yes”

“Yes? Yes what?” Ah, now he was confused.

“Yes, I’d like to be your girlfriend.”

He sat staring at me with his mouth open.

“Traditionally, my saying yes would mean we kiss.”

He moved over to sit beside me, leaned forward and pressed his closed lips against mine. It was a kiss like my cousin gave me when I was nine. It was nothing like the kisses my parents exchanged regularly, and certainly nothing like what Viktor had given me after the Yule Ball. He really had no idea how. Damn his relatives anyway. Damn Cho too for leaving him this ignorant.

“Honestly Harry, I think we can do better than that.” I gazed into those wonderful eyes, “Open your mouth Harry.” We kissed again, our tongues touched, and a passion bloomed between us.

We sat holding hands for the rest of the trip. Ron came by and gave Harry the most horrible look, then left without saying a word.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry:

September 2nd 1996.

I had been asked to report to the Headmaster's office following dinner. The password was 'smarties', but I didn't need it because the gargoyle slid out of my way when I arrived and the door at the top of the stairs slid open before I could knock.

There was Dumbledore sitting behind his desk, projecting his patented serene look thing.

"You wanted to see me Professor?"

"Yes Harry. Lemon Drop?"

"No thank you sir."

"Straight to the point then Harry, I am concerned about some of your decisions recently."

"Excuse me Sir? What have I done?"

"Well placing yourself in the middle of the romance between Mr. Weasley and Miss Granger comes to mind.

"There's no romance between them Sir. Ron made an ass of himself and put his hands on Hermione without her permission. She told me they were not together, so I asked her to go out with me."

"That is not the story Mr. Weasley tells Harry."

“I’ve found that Hermione doesn’t tell stories Professor, she makes factual reports. I am still at a loss to understand why any of this is your business sir. Since when does the Headmaster get involved with student romances?”

“The Weasleys are an important part of the Order Harry. It is important to keep them involved.”

I blinked. “So you are going to offer up Hermione in payment for their services? Will you be dosing her with a love potion? When did you become a pimp?”

Dumbledore’s eyes lost their twinkle. “Perhaps you need to be reminded of your place Mr. Potter.”

“I believe my place is defending my friend from being manipulated sir. This entire discussion is none of your business. I would thank you to stay out of my personal life.”

I left his office without being dismissed.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione:

October 30th 1996.

Other than Harry’s interview with the Headmaster, classes had settled down into the standard predictable pattern. Harry and I carried on with out budding relationship, neither of us in any hurry to push things. It was a time of sweet exploration of each other. We held hands in the common room, and kissed occasionally but nothing like the public displays of affection favored by others in our classes.

Which isn't to say holding hands was all we did. Harry rebuffed my suggestion of a broom closet for some 'alone time' telling me that I deserved better than that. One evening after dinner he led me to the Room of Requirements, which presented its self as an intimate study, with a large comfortable sofa, shelves of books, and a roaring fire.

"Wow, what did you ask the room to be?" I asked.

Harry blushed. "I asked for a room that only you and I could enter and where you and I could relax and spend time together."

We spent several evenings in our room, talking and kissing gently. We had the rest of our lives, we were in no hurry. If I known then what I know now I would have asked the room for a bed to take him too. It was too good to last.

The day before Halloween, classes were over, I was hurrying back to the tower to drop off my books and clean up for dinner. There in the common room was Ron with Lavender Brown. Their mouths were sealed together and his hands were inside her blouse. Hers were rubbing his thigh.

A blind unthinking rage consumed me.

How dare that slut be touching my Ron? Who the hell did she think she was? My fists balled I ran toward them, and Ginny intercepted me. She half wrestled half pushed me up the stairs of to the boy's dorm and into the 6th year boy's room. It was empty.

“Get in a fight with her and you’ll lose your Prefect status. Then who will patrol with my brother?” she said. “Sit down; I’ll get Ron to come talk to you.”

I sat on Ron’s bed and waited. It was almost 5 minutes before Ron appeared at the door and I flew to his arms, he held me and covered my mouth with his, I opened my mouth to taste him and suddenly...

Strawberries.

I knew I would do anything for Ron Weasley, anything at all, if he wanted me now on his bed; I was his for the taking.

Before we could get that far, we were interrupted.

“Oi, Ron. You up here mate? Have you seen Hermione anywh...’ Harry quit speaking when he saw us.

“Hey Hermione, are you ok?”

That struck me as a ridiculous question. How could I not be ok when I was in Ron’s arms? “Everything’s wonderful Harry! Ron has taken me back after I was such a bitch to him on the train.”

Ron extended his hand to Harry “Thanks for taking care of her for me until we could work out our misunderstanding.”

Harry didn’t take Ron’s hand, his eyes visibly dimmed, and in a quiet voice he said, “Sure mate, what ever.” He turned around and left without another word.

The part of my mind worried about Harry was quieted when Ron kissed me again.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry:

October 30th 1996.

Walking in on Hermione and Ron was the hardest thing I've ever done. Cedric being killed in front of me might have been a more horrifying sight, but it still doesn't have the emotional reaction that seeing them together did.

I was in a daze for most of a week. I couldn't talk to Hermione, and I just wanted to smack Ron in his smug face. I couldn't understand how she could throw me over like that. I wandered the halls of Hogwarts not caring what or who I saw, until I encountered Ginny and Dean atop the Astronomy Tower.

I completely lost my mind and attacked Dean. I actually did more damage to myself than him, flailing away at him, I actually hit a stone wall and broke my wrist and several knuckles, he scrambled away and Ginny put herself between us.

"Get out, we broke up and he's not taking it well."

"Merlin Harry, I didn't know."

I fought to get around her, she stepped up and kissed me.

Strawberries.

Why had I ever paid the slightest attention to Hermione?

...---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione:

November 10th 1996.

Ron and I had been dating exclusively for more than a week. We traveled throughout the castle finding places to be alone. He never took me to the Room of Requirements, he preferred broom cupboards. One night we had been kissing and he had been playing with my breasts, (my idea of course, I loved the feeling of his hands and mouth on my breasts) when he mentioned that he had heard oral sex to be an ultimate expression of love. I wasn't sure I was ready for moving to that level. He kissed me again, and I begged him to allow me to taste him.

I was on my knees bobbing my head thankful for the opportunity. When he finished in my mouth he leaned down and said "I love that, it would be nice if you did that every day."

So I did.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry:

December 5th 1996.

Any time we weren't in class Ginny and I were inseparable. We never went beyond kissing, which was fine with me. My dreams became unbelievably vivid. Tom's projections and possessions from the past seemed to be minor day dreams in comparison. At least three times a week I would dream of

Ginny coming to my bed, and we would make love, violently. Dream Ginny was passionate, demanding, and very vocal. But Dream Ginny's kisses didn't taste of strawberries...

...---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione:

June 15th 1997.

Our 6th year finished on a high note, no attacks by Voldemort or his followers. It was almost like he had forgotten about us. At Ron's suggestion I wrote my Parents telling them that I intended to spend the summer at the Burrow. At first they weren't too happy with it, but reconsidered with the next letter.

That night I went to Ron's bed and we made love. Starting with that night we made love every night.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry:

July 1st 1997

Summer at Privet Drive was pretty much the same it always was. Vernon hated me. Petunia hated me. Dudley hated me. I hated them.

The only real difference was my thoughts were always on Ginny. Real Ginny was no longer available, but Dream Ginny was in my bed at least 3 nights a week. Life was good.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione:

July 30th 1997.

Ron had read somewhere about another method of having sex, involving the bum. I'd heard of it before and always rejected the idea as too gross to contemplate. Ron mentioned that he would like to try it, and it was suddenly all I could think about and I begged him to try it with me.

After my shower, I was in the room that Ginny and I shared when I noticed her diary. Curiosity got the better of me and I started to read it. It was fairly boring, full of her declarations of love for Harry. Then I found the entry for 25 October 1996.

Re: The plan to break up Harry and Herms. Dumbles gave Ron and me the potions. mancipiumdiligo for Harry and Herms and vincodiligo for Ron and me.

What the hell? I made note of the potions and hid the diary at the bottom of my trunk.

I dug through every potions book in the burrow and found nothing about either of them. I flued through to #12 Grimauld place to try the Black library, when I found it.

Mancipiumdiligo is the love slave potion, it inspires utter and total devotion to the keyed person.

Vincodiligo is the love command potion. It provides the keyed person with the method to reinforce the love slave potion via his/her bodily fluids, such as a kiss.

A kiss.

I was angry at Lavender, Ron kissed me. I was his. Ron kissed me any suggestion he made became my biggest ambition. He wanted oral sex, he kissed me I was on my knees. He wanted my virginity, he kissed me, I was on my back. He wanted my ass, he kissed me, and I guided him in.

Son of a bitch. They were doing this to Harry as well. I'm going to kill them both. After dinner, I excused myself, avoiding letting Ron kiss me. I shrunk my trunk and stuffed the bed with pillows. I then disillusioned myself and snuck out of the burrow.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Three – Her Wayward Parents

Hermione:

July 30th 1997.

Ron had read somewhere about another method of having sex, involving the bum. I'd heard of it before and always rejected the idea as too gross to contemplate. Ron mentioned that he would like to try it, and it was suddenly all I could think about and I begged him to try it with me.

After my shower, I was in the room that Ginny and I shared when I noticed her diary. Curiosity got the better of me and I started to read it. It was fairly boring, full of her declarations of love for Harry. Then I found the entry for 25 October 1996.

Re: The plan to break up Harry and Herms. Dumbles gave Ron and me the potions. mancipiumdiligo for Harry and Herms and vincodiligo for Ron and me.

What the hell? I made note of the potions and hid the diary at the bottom of my trunk.

I dug through every potions book in the burrow and found nothing about either of them. I flued through to #12 Grimauld place to try the Black library, when I found it.

Mancipiumdiligo is the love slave potion, it inspires utter and total devotion to the keyed person.

Vincodiligo is the love command potion. It provides the keyed person with the method to reinforce the love slave potion via his/her bodily fluids, such as a kiss.

A kiss.

I was angry at Lavender, Ron kissed me. I was his. Ron kissed me any suggestion he made became my biggest ambition. He wanted oral sex, he kissed me I was on my knees. He wanted my virginity, he kissed me, I was on my back. He wanted my ass, he kissed me, and I guided him in.

Son of a bitch. They were doing this to Harry as well. I'm going to kill them both. After dinner, I excused myself, avoiding letting Ron kiss me. I shrunk my trunk and stuffed the bed with pillows. I then disillusioned myself and snuck out of the burrow.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione:

July 31st 1997.

I apparated onto the front porch of my parents home. If I even had my keys, they were buried somewhere deep inside my trunk. It was two a. m. I rang the bell; it took only seconds for the door to open.

My mother opened the door and pulled me inside. I collapsed into her arms sobbing, telling her the story of what Ron had done to me, and how the Headmaster had helped him do it. She held me loosely, not saying a word, allowing me to pour my heart out.

"Well done Grangers. Go back to bed. When you wake up, you won't remember any of this."

I spun around to see Tonks smiling at me. I dimly realized my parents were leaving without comment, they hadn't said a single word the entire time I was there.

"Wotcher Hermione." She backhanded me across the room. "What's the idea running from the Burrow you stupid bint?" She kicked me in the stomach. "Have you any idea how many people you've put out tonight? I've missed my night with Harry, and I like my nights with Harry." She kicked me again.

"Why are you doing this?"

"Dumbledore doesn't want you and Harry together. Can't have the Savior of the Wizarding world polluting his family line with a mudblood, that would piss off the old families. It was bad enough that his father did it. But he wasn't the chosen one was he?"

"Why would you be a part of this? Your own father is Muggle born."

"And I don't give a rat's ass about blood lines. Dumbledore is a great man, he asked me to help him. Helping him means I get to bang Harry Potter." I felt the blood drain from my face. "You didn't know? Mancipiumdiligo only stays active as long as the subject has regular sex. Molly had no problem with Ronny boy doing you, but she wouldn't risk her little princess getting caught and having a reputation, so I've been wearing her face and visiting our Mr. Potter in his bed. He still thinks he's a virgin, thinks I'm a wet dream. I do my part, and the pureblood princess gets her boy toy." She shifted her features to appear to be Ron. "Maybe I'll come over some night and test you out." She leaned down and whispered "I play for both teams."

“Densaugeo!” She was so busy gloating she didn’t notice my pulling the wand out of the sleeve of my jumper. The spell hit her full in the face and her teeth began to grow. I ran out the door.

I ran through the darkened streets. Tonks had recovered enough to chase me, bringing a pair of order members with her. a long range stunning curse flew past my head as I ducked into an alley. At least they were still throwing stunners. They still wanted me alive. Why not? If I was dead Ron was out his plaything..

I was terribly out of breath. How many times had Harry harped on us getting into good physical shape. I ducked through the open gate into the Wilkins back garden. The Wilkins were a Muggle family with 4 boys, all mad for sport. Their back garden should have something I could use. I picked up the cricket bat and waited at the gate for my pursuers. I had gotten lucky with Tonks, she had been over confident, she wouldn’t be again. If I could take her out, the other two would be useless.

It seemed like I waited for hours, but finally the gate latch lifted, it was eased opened. A wand slowly came into view. I swung the bat with all my might and connected hard. Whomever I hit fell to the ground with a soft moan. I swung and connected again. The Moaning stopped. I reached down and grasped the invisibility cloak, pulling it from the still form.

“Hullo Nymphadora.” I whispered. “One would have thought your daddy would have taught you to play Muggle games like hide and seek better than this.” I grabbed Tonk’s wand. I would not put it past them to have a tracker on mine. I waved her wand in a complicated pattern, while silently mouthing a

hex. I smiled when her face became instantly disfigured by a series of close-set purple pustules that had spread across her nose and cheeks to form the word RAPIST. "Getting your jollies with Harry are you?" "Let's see if your shape changing can get around this little hex."

I threw my new invisibility cloak over her shoulders, pocketed my newly acquired untrackable wand and vanished from view. It was time to go to ground. Time to vanish. Many more people were suddenly on my revenge list.

...---ooo000ooo---...

I apparated to Diagon Alley, St. Mungos, and The Ministry, making sure I was seen by an order member at each place. When I lost my last pursuer I made for Surrey. It took me a while to find Little Whinging, and a while more to find Privet Drive. Under the cloak and silenced I watched the house for almost an hour before I spotted the sole guard on watch. Hestia Jones was busy trying to be inconspicuous on a quiet residential street at 3am. Not for the first time it struck me just how dim most wizards were.

When she approached a point of the yard near a large azalea bush, I stunned her, and dragged her body behind the bush. I then entered the house via the back door. When I was crossing the kitchen, I saw the broom cupboard. Harry had spoken of it many times, but I do not think I ever really believed it. I looked inside the cupboard; saw the tiny crib mattress still in there, the childish drawings, the spiders. I imagined Harry as a tiny boy locked in this horrible box. I started to cry. His life was so many orders of magnitude worse than anything I could imagine, and now he was being used as he was.

The whole time I had known him, he had been a hero. This time, I am saving him.

I found his bedroom at the top of the stairs, opened the door and there he was, laying on a ancient bed, muttering in his sleep. I closed the door behind me and put my hand over his mouth.

“Harry!” I whispered. I shook him “Harry, wake up.”

“ermi? What?” he said against my hand.

“Harry, you’ve got to wake up. We’ve got to get out of here.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

While Harry was dressing, I realized that we had no place to go. I put my mind to it and came up with 5 possibilities.

“Harry.” I whispered, “Pick a number between 1 and 5.”

He blinked at me from behind his glasses. “2.” He continued to pack his few belongings. # 2 was my maternal grandmother’s house in Cardiff. That should be random enough for the Order not to find us anytime soon. We exited the house into the far corner of the back garden outside the wards. I explained what I wanted to do; Harry wore his father’s cloak and clung to me. I apparated to Hogsmeade, and jumped away as soon as Professor McGonagall saw me. Then to St Mungos, where Shackbolt saw me again, and then to Diagon Alley, where Tonks was searching. Then on to Cardiff. We landed in the back garden of the house. It had been closed for three years since Gran had died. We did not want to use magic and draw attention to ourselves, but Harry knew how to pick the lock on the back door (the twins taught

him he said) and we were inside. I led Harry up to the master bedroom, making sure that the drapes were drawn and cast 'Lumos'.

Harry was staring at me waiting for an explanation.

"What's going on Hermione?"

I hesitated. How could I tell him this? "Harry, do you recall last year on the ride on the Express? Do you remember what we said to each other.

"Of course I do Hermione. I meant it at the time, but we didn't work out..." He blinked at me. "You fell for Ron, and I fell for Ginny, we stayed friends.

"Do you remember when you started noticing Ginny?"

"I don't know, not long after you and Ron got together, one day she was kissing Dean on top of the Astronomy tower and then I felt like I was going to..."

"You were going to kill him." I saw the look in his eyes. "The same way I felt when I saw Ron and Lavender."

"I was so angry, at him, not her. I knew he wasn't good enough, I was just raging, You remember. Then she kissed me, and I calmed down. It is funny I've only kissed three girls. Cho was all salty and wet, you were just, well lovely, but Ginny, hers are everything; they take my whole mind and just stun it. Her kisses taste like"

"Strawberries."

He blinked. "How did you know? Have you..."

“No Harry, Ron’s kisses taste like strawberries.”

“They do? Is it a family thing?”

“No Harry, it’s a potion thing.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

I spent the rest of the night explaining the Love Slave potion and how they were using us. It shook him. To this day I believe that if anyone other than I had told him this story he would not have believed it.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry:

July 31th 1997.

Happy 17th birthday to me.

I sat on the floor in the dim wand light. If anyone else had told me this story, I’d be finding them a mind healer.

But this is Hermione.

It was insane. Why would Dumbledore do this? Why would Ron and Ginny?

Ginny.

Just the thought of her filled my mind with sweet images. The line of her jaw, her delicate features, the dusting of freckles that drove me insane when she...

The Ginny who did that was my dream Ginny. Was Tonks. Tonks came to my bed and...

Anger bloomed. She came to my bed and pretended to be someone else. I had thought she was a dream, but I still felt guilty for cheating on Ginny.

Ginny.

Who had dosed me with a potion.

Who had used me.

Who had conspired with Dumbledore and Ron to break Hermione and me up.

I pulled myself out of my funk when I heard Hermione sobbing.

I hesitated. Should I do anything? Would she welcome my touch? She was violated far more than I. Ron Weasley was going to die for what he had done to her.

I knelt in front of her, and spread my arms looking into her eyes. She came to me, and clung to me like she was lost at sea and I was the only life vest. I would protect her with all I had. We needed to get this potion out of our bodies. We had to get the Weasleys out of our minds.

Damn them all to hell.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Four – The Odds of Recovery

Harry:

July 31th 1997.

Happy 17th birthday to me.

I sat on the floor in the dim wand light. If anyone else had told me this story, I'd be finding them a mind healer.

But this is Hermione.

It was insane. Why would Dumbledore do this? Why would Ron and Ginny?

Ginny.

Just the thought of her filled my mind with sweet images. The line of her jaw, her delicate features, the dusting of freckles that drove me insane when she...

The Ginny who did that was my dream Ginny. Was Tonks. Tonks came to my bed and...

Anger bloomed. She came to my bed and pretended to be someone else. I had thought she was a dream, but I still felt guilty for cheating on Ginny.

Ginny.

Who had dosed me with a potion.

Who had used me.

Who had conspired with Dumbledore and Ron to break Hermione and me up.

I pulled myself out of my funk when I heard Hermione sobbing.

I hesitated. Should I do anything? Would she welcome my touch? She was violated far more than I. Ron Weasley was going to die for what he had done to her.

I knelt in front of her, and spread my arms looking into her eyes. She came to me, and clung to me like she was lost at sea and I was the only life vest. I would protect her with all I had. We needed to get this potion out of our bodies. We had to get the Weasleys out of our minds.

Damn them all to hell.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione stirred. Slowly waking she was surprised to find herself alone. Where is Ron? Then the memories of the previous day flooded back.

Where is Harry?

She heard foot steps coming up the stairs. There was a knock at the door.

“Hermione? Just me. Can I come in?”

“Oh thank god. Come in here.” He entered carrying a canvas bag.

“I found this shopping bag in the kitchen. There’s no electricity, but the water is still on. It’s cold but you can get a shower if you want it. I made a trip to the market and got a few things. I only had £18 on me, but it’s a start.”

He emptied the bag, a box of prepackaged pastries and several bottles of water. He noticed her look. “I figured we needed to flush the potions out of our bodies, enough water should do it.”

She felt stupid. She had been planning to attempt to brew a highly complicated purging potion, when all they really needed to do was drink a lot of water over several days. Harry was so unassuming it was easy to forget just how smart he was.

She kissed him on the cheek and excused herself to the bathroom. The water in the shower WAS cold, but the Linen closet still had clean (if dusty) towels. Ignoring the top towel she took two of those under it (and fairly dust free) one she used to make a wrap for her hair the other she wrapped about her body.

She returned to the bedroom, and heard his gasp. Then smiled when she saw that he was averting his eyes. “You can look at me Harry. I’ve got a lot more on than I would at the beach.”

“I’ve never been to the beach.”

“Harry.” She hugged him. “We need to make some plans.”

“I was figuring I’d try to make it to Gringotts to get some cash. I know that there’s a chance I’ll get caught, but what choice do we have.”

“Actually, we don’t need to do that. Remember last summer you gave me access to your vault? I’ve been stashing cash in four different banks and have caches of galleons. I was preparing for if we couldn’t go to Diagon Alley, and well, now we can’t...”

“That’s ingenious. Why didn’t I ever think of that? How much do we have stashed? “

“Almost £30,000 and 5,000 Galleons.”

“Ok. Wow. What would I do without you to look out for me?”

“Ok, we need to stop owls from finding us. When Sirius was hiding at Grimauld place, I saw Dumbledore cast this one: *velieris ex avis*.” Harry glowed with a orange light for a second. “Ok, now you do me.”

“Why, Miss Granger, I’m not that kind of man!”

“Hardy Har Har. Do it.”

“*velieris ex avis*” Hermione also glowed for a second.

“Good. Now we need a better place to stay.”

“We’ve got to go Muggle. If we’re going to be safe, I’d suggest a hotel for a couple of days, then get out of the country, Canada, the States, Australia or New Zealand since I only speak English.” He looked thoughtful. “And we’ve got to get your parents.”

“They’re controlled Harry.”

“Doesn’t matter, they’re your parents.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Marcy Duncan had been the receptionist at Granger’s Dental Surgery since the day it opened, 19 years before. She had seen patients dragged in by relatives, she had seen patients who had done damage to themselves seeking pain meds, she had even put up with young women coming to the surgery for no other reason than to try to get close to Mr. Granger, but none of that had prepared her for the young woman who walked into the surgery before they had opened, even before she had unlocked the door.

She was about 16, with dirty blond hair and grey, almost silver, eyes that seemed to be looking in different directions. Her clothing was an odd mix matching of styles, from 60s flower child to modern school girl. She had come in without an appointment, and was asking to see either of the Grangers, occasionally grasping her jaw and delivering a most unconvincing ‘ouch!’

Marcy had just finished explaining for the fourth time that the Grangers were very busy and didn’t see non emergency patients without an appointment, when the young girl fixed her with both of those odd grey eyes and said.

“This is the most important message you will ever deliver. You need to tell one of the Grangers that Luna Lovegood is here to see them about an important tooth related emergency. Tell them that I am a good friend of their daughter Hermione, and that the tooth related emergency is so important I need to speak with them right now. About teeth.”

Marcy felt oddly compelled to go find one of the Grangers.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Anne Granger had felt odd this morning, very odd. It was as if she had done something very important the night before, but for some reason could not quite recall what it had been. She sipped her tea, and read over the notes about the procedures she had scheduled to do that day. She smiled slightly when she heard music coming from her husband's office only a wall away. He was on his Dire Straits kick again, the rhythms of The Sultans Of Swing drifted over to her. He was probably playing his 'air guitar' in a manor he imagined simulated Mark Knopfler. He was such a goof.

Marcy knocked on her door "Anne? There's a young woman out front, she says she knows Hermione, and she has a very important 'tooth emergency'."

"A friend of Hermione? Show her in." She paused. What ever it was that she could not remember from the night before was about Hermione. This was very odd, while she did not share her daughter's eclectic memory, not being able to recall something that happened the night before was disturbing.

Marcy guided the young blonde-haired woman to the door of her office, and Anne rose to greet her.

"Good Morning, I'm Anne Granger. Marcy said that you are a friend of Hermione?"

"Yes, my name is Luna Lovegood. Hermione is a year ahead of me at Hogwarts. First, I must apologize for deceiving your

receptionist; I am not here for a tooth emergency.” The girl looked a bit embarrassed at her ‘deception’ that had fooled no one.

“How can I help you Luna?” Anne asked, recalling that Hermione had spoken of this girl, saying that she was sweet, but somewhat odd in her outlook.

“I am here to help you. Actually, I am here to help Harry. Helping you would help Hermione, which would help Harry. It is important to help Harry.”

“I don’t understand what you’re trying to tell me Luna. Could you explain it to me?”

Luna nodded. “You share Hermione’s highly organized mind, you aren’t likely to accept things out side your frame of reference without an explanation. Could you call Mr. Granger in here as well? If I am to explain everything it would be more efficient to only do it once.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Andrew Granger joined them, at Luna’s insistence Marcy was canceling their appointments for the day.

“I don’t know what Hermione has told you of our world, but I will attempt to be concise. The Wizing world is at war, and has been with hot and cold periods since the 1920s. The most recent cold period started on October 31st 1981.”

“The Dark Lord Voldemort had heard of a prophecy of a child born in late July with the power to kill him. He discovered that the two children fit the requirements to fulfill the prophecy were the heirs of two ancient bloodlines, the

Potters and the Longbottoms. He chose to eliminate Harry Potter first. He attacked the Potter home in Wales, killing Harry's father and mother. When he attempted to kill Harry who was 17 months old at the time, the killing curse rebounded and destroyed Lord Voldemort's body, but not, for some reason, his spirit."

"Harry survived and was placed in the care of his non magical relatives who treated him badly and never told him of his heritage. In our world, he is The Boy Who Lived, or the Chosen One. He is a hero and a symbol of hope. When he turned eleven, he learned of his magical heritage when he received his Hogwarts Letter. It was on the train to Hogwarts he met the love of his life, your daughter Hermione."

"But Hermione is with her Boyfriend Ron."

Luna looked sad. "I will get to that. That first year Harry and Ron saved Hermione from a mountain troll that had been let into the castle as a distraction."

"Hermione mentioned that troll incident. So it was more dangerous than she let on? She could have been hurt?"

"A Mountain troll averages 4 meters tall, weighing in at 400 kilos, they are immensely strong. It is amazing that all three of them were not killed outright. Rather it was the first example I have found of what I am calling the "Harry Factor," where his magic does not follow any rules that Harry is not aware of. He did not know that it was impossible for two untrained first years to defeat a Troll, so he did it. They all got rather banged up, but they all survived. The Troll did not."

“The three of them bonded following that and they united to prevent a wizard possessed by the spirit of Voldemort from getting the Philosopher’s Stone.”

“Their second year had Ron’s sister Ginny becoming possessed by a soul fragment from Voldemort’s childhood, and opening the chamber of secrets, releasing a basilisk into the school. Hermione was petrified by seeing the basilisk’s reflection, Harry and Ron found the entrance to the chamber, but they were separated by a cave in. Harry continued alone. When he finally entered the chamber he found that the soul fragment was busy draining the life force from Ginny so that he could live again. Harry had to kill the basilisk then destroy the dark magical artifact that was the anchor for the soul fragment. Harry was badly injured, and by all rights should have died, but they all survived.”

“Third year Harry had to deal with an escaped murderer who everyone thought was out to kill him, but turned out to be his father’s best friend and Harry’s godfather. A professor who turned out to be a werewolf, and dementors. Again by any reasonable expectation Harry should have died, but did not.”

“Fourth year, Harry was forced into a magical contest to compete in the very dangerous TriWizard Tournament. He was almost killed by a dragon, almost drowned saving Ron and a little girl from the lake, and following a maze competition was kidnapped to supply blood that allowed the recreation of a Body for Voldemort. Once again, by any sane evaluation, he should have died. He didn’t.”

“Fifth year, the ministry actively set out to deny the return of Voldemort, to do this they chose to discredit Headmaster Dumbledore and Harry. A most horrible woman was set upon the school, and she tortured Harry among others.

Harry, Hermione, Ron, Ginny, Neville, and I ended up at the Ministry of Magic, and in a fight with a full dozen Death Eaters, Harry saw his Godfather die, and was possessed by Voldemort. We all should have died, we somehow survived, with Hermione being hurt the worst”

“On the train to Hogwarts for sixth year, Harry finally told Hermione how he felt about her. Hermione revealed her feelings for him, and they began to date. Headmaster Dumbledore decided that the Old Pureblood families would never tolerate the Chosen One mixing his line with a Muggle born witch. He told Harry he needed to break it off, Harry told him to go to hell. Dumbledore approached Ron and Ginny Weasley as well as their mother Molly. He arranged for Harry and Hermione to be dosed with a most horrible love potion keyed to Ron and Ginny, and for Ron and Ginny to dose themselves with the master potion, so that they could control their thralls.

The Love potion only remains effective if the victim has frequent sexual relations. I’m afraid that Ronald has been using Hermione in a most unforgivable way.”

“I’m going to kill the little son of a bitch!”

“I agree with your evaluation of Molly Weasley, but I suspect that if Hermione does not kill him, Harry will beat you to it. Harry’s sexual treatments have been coming at night by Auror Nymphadora Tonks, using her metamorphagus abilities to wear Ginny’s face and cement the bond.”

“Yesterday Hermione discovered the reason for her all consuming interest in Ronald. She ran home to you. Her absence was discovered, and you were placed under the imperius curse, controlled so that when she showed up you

would alert the Order members and turn her over to them to be obliviated and returned to the Burrow. Hermione escaped before they could obliviate her. She went to Harry's home, and convinced him to come with her; they have gone to ground in Muggle England somewhere and are looking for a safe place to stay. They will then come for you."

Anne looked at her oddly. "When did Hermione contact you?"

"She did not." Luna paused wondering how much these Muggles could understand, how much they would believe. "My bloodline is rife with seers and clairvoyants on both sides. My gift is the ability to see possibilities. For every decision reality forks. I can see the end result of those forks, as each decision is made in this particular branch of reality, the consequences of the alternative decision is lost to me. I am conscious of an infinite number of us having this conversation. An hour ago I was conscious of the current infinity and an infinite number of us NOT having this conversation. As soon as we began to speak, I lost contact with the infinity who are not speaking."

"Ginny was my best and only friend growing up. I have loved Ronald since I was nine. It broke my heart when I saw what they were doing, what they had become, knowing there was nothing I could do to stop them. Then I saw Hermione free herself, and this possibility manifested, I had to try. Harry is our only hope, and he will only succeed with Hermione at his side. Even if that was not true, they didn't deserve to be controlled and used the way they were."

"You said you were here to help? How?"

“Mr. Granger, Hermione has an extremely organized mind. She knows that they are being tracked. She secured unregistered wands for both of them. She used a spell to inhibit an owl from being able to find them. They spent last night at Mrs. Granger’s mother’s house; they are now on the move and will be deciding what hotel to stay at tonight. Hermione has a list of 12 possible hotels across England. She is currently randomizing the list and will ask Harry to pick a number between 1 and 12, which will be the hotel at which they stay. She intends to get a suite, because Harry has insisted that you be rescued. When I know where they are staying, with your permission I intend to take you to them.”

“How much trouble are you likely to get into?”

“Not much. There is one chance in 12 that what I have done and will be doing will be discovered. Even then there is not much that can be punished because I am doing nothing wrong, legally or morally.” She stiffened. “They’ve chosen. The Dorchester in Mayfair.” She turned her attention back to the Grangers. “Have you decided? Do you want to join Hermione?”

“I’ve been bothered all morning by not being able to remember something that happened last night. Is this due to what ever they did to control us?”

Luna considered for a second. “Yes, most likely.”

The Grangers exchanged a look. “Yes we would like to join our daughter.”

“Thank you.” The blonde said quietly. “Wendy? Leest?”

There was a pop of Elvin apparition

“Thank you for coming Little Friends.”

“How can we help you Miss Luna?”

“Could you help me get to the Dorchester Hotel, then home?”

“Of Course Miss Luna.”

“Could you also help my friends?” she gestured toward the Grangers.

“Of course Miss Luna.”

Andrew Granger knelt down next to the small beings. “Hello, I am Andrew Granger. My daughter has told me of people like you. You are House Elves, correct?”

“No, we are not slaves. We are Forest Elves, we live free. We know no bonds.” Said the male Elf.

The Female Elf continued. “The Lovegood Clan has been friends of the Forest Elves for generations, we help them where we can, and they aid us.”

“My apologizes for the unintended slight. I thought my daughter had told me that he Forest Elves were extinct.”

“She probably did.” Luna shook her head sadly. “It is written that way in many texts. I love Hermione, I really do, but for all her intelligence, she is sorely lacking in imagination...”

...---ooo000ooo---...

When the door closed behind the bellman Harry and Hermione were startled by the pop of elfin apparition. They whirled about with their wands out and ready. There they saw Andrew and Anne Granger, Luna Lovegood and two very different looking elves. Hermione started to run to her parents, but Harry held her back.

‘The three of you shut up until I say you can talk. Mr. Granger, tell me the name of the dog Hermione had when she was four.’

“We’ve never had a dog. She had a cat named Mittens.”

“Mrs. Granger, How does Hermione take her tea?”

“A dash of milk. She gets annoyed if you stir it for her.”

“Luna, why were you putting up signs after the fight at the ministry?”

“To get my things back from my Housemates of course.”

Harry never broke eye contact with his guests. “That’s Luna alright, and that’s how you take your tea. What about the cat?”

“Exactly right Harry, it’s them.”

Harry lowered his wand. “I’m sorry, I had to be sure.”

Hermione rushed to her parents, Harry gestured for Luna to follow him to one of the bedrooms.

“How did you find us?”

“I’m a seer Harry. I can see connections and probabilities. I knew this was my opportunity to help you. You will need this book.” She handed the thin tome to him. “I must be going. You might want to ask your friend Dobby to try and get the Granger’s clothing for them. Good luck on your trip.”

“Good luck? If you’re a seer, shouldn’t you know how the trip, if we take one turns out?”

“Of course I do, but I don’t know which one it is until you chose it.”

She took the hands of the two strange elves and disappeared with a pop.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Five – The Runaways

When the door closed behind the bellman Harry and Hermione were startled by the pop of elfin apparition. They whirled about with their wands out and ready. There they saw Andrew and Anne Granger, Luna Lovegood and two very different looking elves. Hermione started to run to her parents, but Harry held her back.

‘The three of you shut up until I say you can talk. Mr. Granger, tell me the name of the dog Hermione had when she was four.’

“We’ve never had a dog. She had a cat named Mittens.”

“Mrs. Granger, How does Hermione take her tea?”

“A dash of milk. She gets annoyed if you stir it for her.”

“Luna, why were you putting up signs after the fight at the ministry?”

“To get my things back from my Housemates of course.”

Harry never broke eye contact with his guests. “That’s Luna alright, and that’s how you take your tea. What about the cat?”

“Exactly right Harry, it’s them.”

Harry lowered his wand. “I’m sorry, I had to be sure.”

Hermione rushed to her parents, Harry gestured for Luna to follow him to one of the bedrooms.

“How did you find us?”

“I’m a seer Harry. I can see connections and probabilities. I knew this was my opportunity to help you. You will need this book.” She handed the thin tome to him. “I must be going. You might want to ask your friend Dobby to try and get the Granger’s clothing for them. Good luck on your trip.”

“Good luck? If you’re a seer, shouldn’t you know how the trip, if we take one turns out?”

“Of course I do, but I don’t know which one it is until you chose it.”

She took the hands of the two strange elves and disappeared with a pop.

...---ooo000ooo---...

After Luna left Harry sat in the bedroom waiting for the Grangers to do what they needed to do. One thing they did not need was him there. While he had no active roll in her abuse, he was the cause of it. If not for him, Dumbledore would never have given Ron the potion.

Dumbledore was going to die.

Guilt. On the plus side, this was a sign that the Love Slave potion in his system was thinning out. Before he wouldn’t have had the emotional depth needed to feel guilt. He hadn’t felt the need for Ginny yet today. That made the constant need to pee a small price to pay indeed.

Ginny was going to pay. He still had enough of the potion in his system to not allow himself to contemplate the pleasure he might get out of killing her. That would change.

Through the thin walls of the suite he heard the anger of Hermione's father, the supportive words of her mother, and Hermione's sobs.

Ron Weasley was going to die, but first he was going to wish he had never been born.

The anger built in him and the room almost vibrated with the magic roiling off his body. He stripped and got into the shower to let the hot water calm him. One question kept rolling through his mind. How was he ever going to make his failure up to Hermione?

He needed a plan. He already had his goal. The plan would allow the attaining the goal. The goal was simple, after getting Hermione and her family to a safe place, return to Hogwarts and not leaving a single stone standing. He needed a plan to achieve that. To get the plan he needed Hermione safe. They were NOT getting their hands on her again.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Andrew Granger listened to the tale his daughter told. He had already heard most of it from Luna Lovegood, but to actually hear it from his own baby girl made his blood boil. He wanted to get his hands on this 'Ron Weasley' and make him pay for what the punk had done to his little girl. That so called 'Headmaster' was on his list as well. He hated this feeling of helplessness that these 'wizards' inspired in him.

Anne Granger spent her time hugging her distraught daughter and telling her that everything was going to be all right, praying that she wasn't lying. Anne wished she had the courage to tell Hermione how almost the same thing happened to at the same age. For Anne it had been a older boy she worshiped, who took everything Anne had to give him, and attempted to use her to pay off a debt to another man. Anne marveled at the strength her daughter had shown in freeing herself from her situation, Anne herself had needed her father to free her from her own controller.

Then there was this other boy. The Lovegood girl had suggested that all of this, everything that had happened to Hermione was a side effect of attempts to control Harry Potter. After her own parents had failed her, she had risked everything to rescue this boy from his own thrall. Hermione's letters had been full of Harry since the incident with the Troll in her first year, until just after Halloween last year, then suddenly it was as if Harry Potter had vanished from the face of the earth and Ron Weasley was the embodiment of the second coming. It had struck her as odd at the time and now that she knew the reasons behind the change she had an anger building inside of her that matched her husbands. How could a family she had entrusted her daughter to do such things. She and Molly Weasley were going to have words.

Hermione suddenly sat up from her mother's arms.

"Where's Harry?"

"He went into that room with Luna" her father pointed to the closed door. "I'm sure he's fine Hermione."

"No Daddy, you don't understand. If he gets left alone he'll start thinking that this is all his fault and he might just leave

to protect us. To protect me.” She rushed to the door, pushed it open and found Harry with a towel around his waist searching for something clean to wear. She flew to him and enveloped him into a hug.

“I’m sorry Harry, I shouldn’t have been ignoring you!”

“Hermione! I’m not dressed.” He looked up to see both her parents watching them. “Hermione! You’re dads gonna kill me.” He locked eyes with Andrew Granger and saw testament to the truth of that statement.

“Oh you hush. Daddy wouldn’t do anything like that.”

Oh yes I would, they would never find your body. Andrew Granger sent to the man his daughter was hugging telepathically. Harry’s eyes widened to indicate that the message had been received and acknowledged.

“Why don’t you let me get dressed? Ok?”

“You listen to me Harry Potter. This. Is. Not. Your. Fault. If you even think anything like that I will personally kick your butt. You did not do this, you were done to, just as I was.”

“You were done to a lot worse than I ‘mione.” He said quietly as the door closed.

Hermione didn’t hear him. Andrew did.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry came finished dressing and entered the sitting room of the suite a few minutes later. To find Hermione and her mother were in the other bedroom. He approached Andrew

and extended his hand. "We've never really met Sir. I'm Harry Potter, and I cannot tell you how sorry I am for all this."

"So all this is because of you?"

"Yes sir. Hermione tells me that it was decided upon high that my having a Muggle born girlfriend would upset the old pure blood families. When I chose to ignore their warnings and date Hermione, a form of mind control was used on us." He looked ashamed. "I cannot change what happened Sir, but I promise I will use every resource available to me to protect Hermione from here on."

"And what resources might that be?"

"Harry's rich Daddy. Insanely rich. He's the heir of two different very rich families."

"And he dresses like this because he's eccentric?"

"I dress like this because until the night before last every minute of my life was controlled and micromanaged to forge me into an unquestioning weapon." I owe my freedom to Hermione." He looked lost for a moment. "Hermione has been squirreling away portions of my money into Non-magical banks for more than a year. There's enough to get us to pretty much anywhere in the world to keep the bastards from getting their hands on her again."

"Why should we go with you?"

"I hope you don't. I hope you take the money I'm going to make available to you and head for parts unknown. Take Hermione and get her as far away from me as you possibly can."

"I am not leaving Harry."

"Yes you are. I am going to kill Ron, I'm going to kill Dumbledore. I'm going to cripple Tonks. The Wizarding world can go to hell with my compliments. Voldemort can have them. I want you out of here." He turned to Andrew Granger. "Mr. Granger as soon as I can get to a Gringotts branch I can put three million pounds in your hands. I want you to take that money and Hermione and run until you find a place that has never heard of magic."

...---ooo000ooo---...

"You aren't sending me away Harry"

"You aren't coming back with me Hermione."

"You're serious? You can go to the bank and put your hands on three million pounds?"

"Yes Daddy." Hermione never broke the death glare she was sending Harry. "He could do that without putting a major dent in his account." She stepped up to Harry. "What makes you think you can tell me what to do?"

"Being close to me is what got you hurt Hermione. Because of me you were raped for more than a year. Because of me your parents were put under the imperius. Because of me you are on the run."

"Because we'd all be so safe with Riddle?"

"We aren't talking about Riddle. Riddle didn't do this. Riddle only tried to kill us. Dumbledore controlled us. The Weasleys

raped you. They are supposed to be the good guys. There are no good guys in this mess. There are only evil bastards, less evil bastards and innocents.”

Hermione was silent as she digested what he had said. Harry’s anger burned through the last of the potion clouding and subverting his emotions.

“I’m sorry Hermione. You’ve got to stay away from me. God knows what they will do to you next. I love you Hermione. I have since I saw you petrified in the hospital wing second year. I meant every single word I said to you before they took you away from me. If anything else was to happen to you because of me, I don’t know what I would do. I’m going out for a while.” He turned and left the suite.

...---ooo000ooo---...

The Elevator arrived and he entered. He was alone. Excellent. “Dobby”

There was a pop and Harry’s oddest friend appeared before him. “Yes Harry Potter sir?

“Dobby, could you do me a favor and take me to Gringotts?”

“Oh Yes, Harry Potter sir.” The elf reached to take his hand.

“Oh and Dobby, pleas don’t tell anyone where I am, or where I’m going ok?”

“Dobby never tell any of Harry Potters business to anyone.”

“Not even Dumbledore?”

“Not to anyone Harry Potter sir.”

“Thank you Dobby.”

They were gone.

...---ooo000ooo---...

“He loves me.” She said in a quiet voice.

“Hermione,” her mother said. “You need to go after him.”

“Like hell she does. He admitted it himself. HE’S the reason they did this to her.”

“Shut up Andy. The boy’s in love, and sees her in a pain he can’t do anything about. Hermione you need to decide what you feel for this boy. Your history together makes me think I know the answer, but you need to decide for yourself. Staying with him because you won’t be told what to do is stupid. My daughter isn’t stupid. Staying with him because you love him is all the reason you need. Your best revenge on the people who did this would be to spit in their eye and expose them for what they are.” She pulled Hermione into a hug. “You need to decide what you feel about this young man.”

She turned to her husband. “You. The bedroom. Now.”

Hermione smiled, just a bit. Daddy was in trouble. He was going to be yelled at, but would be allowed to make it up to Mum if he played his cards right.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Upon his arrival at Gringotts Harry was immediately spotted.

“Wotcher Harry.”

“Piss off Tonks. I don’t have time for some one who is too ashamed to wear her own face.”

“Ha Ha Potter. Yer coming with me.”

“Don’t think so Auror. I’m 17, an adult. You can go piss off now.”

“Dumbledore wants you now.”

“I bet the old pimp does. You would know, being one of his whores. I don’t work for him, so I don’t really care what the old whoremaster wants.”

She started to draw her wand. “We can do this the unfriendly way if you want...”

“We certainly can.” He raised his voice so that it echoed throughout the reception area. “Auror Tonks, you can’t talk about the Bank Manager that way, His mother most certainly IS NOT a troll, and HE ISN’T EMBEZZLING from my vault!”

Goblin security responded almost immediately. It reminded Harry of a joke he heard second year “what do you call an Auror who gets in a fight with a Security Goblin? Dead”. Not a great joke, just amazingly accurate. Tonks wasn’t killed, just roughed up and wrapped up for delivery to the ministry. During her tussle with the Security Goblin, the hood of her cloak came down and Harry saw the word inscribed in her face in purple acne. Hermione hadn’t mentioned doing that, but no one else he knew could have done it.

A senior Goblin teller appeared at his elbow. "Thank you for defending the Bank Manager Mr. Potter, just the sort of even handedness we have come to expect from the Potter clan over the centuries. Bank Manager Ragnak asked that I extend an invitation to his office to discuss your financial needs."

"Please extend my gratitude to the Bank Manager for his offer, but my business with the Bank is far too trivial for his attention."

"The Bank Manager suggested that you might feel that way, and instructed me to tell you that if Lord Potter wants to exchange a jar of knuts for Galleons, it is of utmost importance to the Bank Manager. Ragnak is very used to getting his way Mr. Potter, you might as well get the attention your position rates."

"You win Senior Teller. Might I ask your name?"

"Why would a Wizard Lord care about my name?"

"You know my name and use it with my honorific, it seems only polite to return the courtesy. Besides, I'm only wealthy or a 'Wizard Lord' because I had ancestors who achieved something. From what I've been told of Goblin society, you earned your position Senior Teller, all I did was inherit."

"My public name is Baldeur Mr. Potter. You are a most unusual Wizard."

"I'm just a school kid, Senior Teller Baldeur. All I know about anything is what people have taught me. Lately I have found that much of what I have been taught to be lies."

“When you are ready to leave Mr. Potter, the Bank Manager will send for me. Have a profitable meeting.”

“Thank you Senior Teller Baldeur, may your vault fill to overflowing.”

“Welcome Mr. Potter. How may Gringotts serve the house of Potter today?”

“Sir, I’m sure my business is far too trivial for your attention.”

The old Goblin laughed, a most frightening sound. “Your father said the same thing word for word the first time he came in after achieving his majority. I will tell you, as I told him, the senior Accounts always have the individual attention of the Bank Manager.”

“So, Mr. Potter, where are you going?”

That startled Harry. “How did you know about that?”

“I make it my business to know what my major accounts are doing Mr. Potter. Ms. Granger is placed on the access list for your vault. She starts dating you, our Line Maintenance team pegs her as the lead contender for the next Lady Potter. Albus Dumbledore makes some quiet inquiries about how elder houses feel about linking you with a muggle born. Then suddenly, two months later with absolutely no warning, she completely uncharacteristically leaves you for the youngest son of the Weasley Clan. A fine young man, but he doesn’t fit her profile in any way. Within a week, you are in the arms of the Daughter of the Weasley Clan. She IS within your profile, but the rapid switch between them is completely out of character. Our Line Maintenance team projected you

having at least two months of down time after Miss Granger. Then two nights ago, Miss Granger suddenly leaves the Weasley Clan residence in the middle of the night, Albus Dumbledore rallies his militia to find her. There is a confrontation at the Granger home, then you disappear from your home. Miss Granger's parents suddenly cancel their appointments for today, and are in the process of referring their patient base to other dental professionals. Finally, a credit card linked to one of the Muggle Bank accounts she setup for you was used for the first time this morning at the Dorchester Hotel. So, Mr. Potter, where are you going?"

"Wow."

"Indeed Mr. Potter"

"I don't know if I'm really all that comfortable with your level of knowledge of my life."

"I just pay attention to what wizards say Mr. Potter. We are not monitoring you, nor are we following you around. We gather information, nothing more."

Harry sighed. "I'm no match for you sir. Next time I come I'm bringing Hermione Granger with me, and sitting back to watch. A battle between two intellects such as hers and yours should be educational." He smiled at the thought. "I'd like to go to Boston, in the USA. Specifically I would like to be near Salem Academy, as soon as possible."

Ragnak did something on his desk. A sheet of parchment appeared over the desk. "There is a flight from Heathrow to Logan tomorrow night, leaving at 8pm."

"Excellent."

Ragnak passed a package to him. "Your Passport and Muggle identification. I've discovered a mistake on them that somehow got your date of birth incorrect by one year, so they accidentally show you to be 18, the Muggle age of majority. Make sure you have that corrected when you return. The Granger's passports are also there, including Muggle identification for Miss. Granger. There are also directions to the Salem branch office of Gringotts." When you arrive in Salem, they will have appropriate housing available for you. Your airline tickets and rental car information will be delivered to your suite by noon tomorrow."

"Here are Gringotts cards for yourself and Miss Granger. They function exactly like Muggle Credit cards, except of course they only debit your account. Is there anything else I can do for you?"

"I have access to the Potter Family vault now that I'm of age, correct?"

"You have access to the Potter Family vaults. There are nine in total, not including your trust vault that you have been added to the access list for."

The old Goblin seemed to be waiting for him to ask something he thought for a second and realized what he was being told. "Who else has access to the Potter Family vaults?"

"Current access list for the Potter Family Vaults consists of yourself, Miss Granger has access to your trust vault, and Albus Dumbledore has access to all of your vaults."

"Has Dumbledore had many transactions with those vaults?"

“Yes, several substantial transactions.”

“Can I stop that?”

“Yes, now that you have your majority.”

“Remove Albus Dumbledore from access of all Potter vaults, accounts and anything else Potter family related.” He thought for a moment. “What about the Black vaults? Who has access to them?”

“Yourself, Albus Dumbledore and Bellatrix Lestrangle.”

Sweet Merlin. “Do I control access to the Black vaults as well?”

“You do.” The Goblin smiled inwardly. The boy was uneducated, but learned quickly.

“Remove everyone but myself from the Black access accounts. Please attempt to recover what ever in the way of material things that have been removed from either the Potter or Black vaults, and please get me a statement of all transactions performed by either Dumbledore or Lestrangle.”

“The Salem office will have that accounting for you. Recovery of personal items will come at a cost. A ‘finders fee’ if you will.”

“How much?”

“10 percent.”

“Make it 15 percent with the additional going directly to the recovery team. I prefer motivated employees.”

“Done. Anything else?”

“Yes. Withdraw the equivalent of 3 million pounds from the Black Vaults and startup a vault in the name of Andrew and Anne Granger. I would also like one of those Gringotts cards for that vault.”

Ragnak make some notes. “It will be ready in 5 minutes.”

“Thank you sir. Now all I have to do is get back to the Hotel.”

“A portkey will also be ready when the Granger Vault is ready.”

“Thank you again sir. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate your help and honesty.”

“It is the very least we could do for a major account holder.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

The portkey dropped him on his ass in the sitting room of the suite. A very angry Andrew Granger was staring at him.

“Go ahead. Kick my ass. I probably deserve it.”

“I want you to stay away from her.”

“And I want to stay away from her. I won’t risk her. Look Mr. Granger, I’ve made arrangements to go to Salem in the US where we can get Hermione into the Academy if you like. Here.” He handed Andrew the Gringotts cards and account

key. "The three million we spoke about. Do what you want with it. The Flight is at 8 pm tomorrow, the bank managed to get your passports." He handed them over as well. "Come with me, go somewhere else, I don't care as long as Hermione is safe."

"My god, you do love her."

"I think I do. Everyone tells me I do. I don't really know what love is. I never got it from my family. What I've seen at school that is called love seemed to be a lot of lust and not a whole lot of dedication. A friend I told myself I loved like a brother took Hermione away from me and raped her. A friend I told myself I loved like a sister took me away from Hermione. A man I loved like a grandfather orchestrated the whole thing."

"I need to discuss where we go from her with Anne. I'll let you know tomorrow."

"Fair enough."

"Which room are you taking? We'll get out of your way."

"I was planning on the sofa. You and Mrs. Granger deserve a private room, Hermione deserves one as well. Me, well I've got a lot to answer for."

Andrew Granger stood and went to the room his wife had retired to. He lay back on the bed and stared at the ceiling.

"What is it?" Anne asked.

"We're millionaires."

“You aren’t taking his money.”

“He loves her. He loves her enough to try and send her away.”

“I knew that. I told you that. Where are we going.”

“America. Salem. He wants to get Hermione to go to the Academy there.”

“America with three million pounds. That has possibilities. It will be a good place to wait while He and Hermione return to try and fix this.”

“She isn’t coming back here.”

“Of course she is. He just doesn’t know it yet.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Six – Planes, Trains, and Automobiles

Andrew Granger stood and went to the room his wife had retired to. He lay back on the bed and stared at the ceiling.

“What is it?” Anne asked.

“We’re millionaires.”

“You aren’t taking his money.”

“He loves her. He loves her enough to try and send her away.”

“I knew that. I told you that. Where are we going?”

“America. Salem. He wants to get Hermione to go to the Academy there.”

“America with three million pounds. That has possibilities. It will be a good place to wait while He and Hermione return to try and fix this.”

“She isn’t coming back here.”

“Of course she is. He just doesn’t know it yet.

...---ooo000ooo---...

4 hours into the flight, the meal served, the movie shown, now with the lights dimmed; people through out the plane were sleeping, or trying to. Harry was far too excited at being in an air plane and flying to the United States to possibly calm down enough to sleep, so he was reading the novel Hermione had suggested he pick up at a bookstore prior to

the flight. It was a science fiction novel (also recommended by Hermione. "You'll like this Harry, his books tell a story without talking down to you"), that despite the title did not seem to have anything to do with a cat walking through walls, but was a pretty good story anyway. He was a third of the way through and if it continued like it started, he might have to see what else this 'Heinlein' had written. Hermione and her parents were also awake ("Try not to sleep on the flight Harry, we'll need to acclimate to the time zone change"), and reading.

He was somewhat surprised when Hermione drew her wand and cast a Notice-Me-Not on both of them. "Come with me." She whispered.

She led him to the forward head, opened the door, entered, and pulled him in after her. Quickly sealing the door and casting silencing charms, she turned to face him in the close space.

"You aren't leaving me to go off tilting at windmills Harry. Without me, you will be back in their thrall in a week. Without you, I would be too hesitant to protect myself adequately. You need me. I need you."

"Hermione they only did this to you because of me. Your parents are on the run because of me. If they got you again, I don't know what I would..."

She kissed him. Kissed him hard, it was an intense needful kiss. It more than took his breath away, it took his mind away. After an eternity of bliss, she broke the kiss, leaving him gasping for breath and hungry for more.

“I needed to know.” She looked into his eyes, tears forming in her own. “Needed to know if what we had was still there. It really has changed. I don’t feel the same anymore Harry. Before I wanted you. I don’t want you anymore Harry.” His heart broke at her words. “I need you. If I lost you, I would not want to go on. I just wanted you to know that.” She unsealed the door and turned to leave.

Harry took her face in his hands and drew her back into the kiss; she resisted for a second, and then surrendered to him. They ran their hands over each other’s bodies, and still their mouths were fused. She undid his belt and his trousers fell to the ground. She freed him from his boxers, pushing him back against the sink. She raised her skirt, rising to her tip toes, guided him into herself. Their shared passion spiked as they drove into each other in complete abandon.

His rational self noted that none of this following her turning away to leave had ever happened.

His dream self noted that this was a dream, not a documentary, and further suggested that his rational self shut the hell up and quit messing around with a perfectly good fantasy. Besides, that hot dream flight attendant was about to open the door, discovering them with dream Hermione and find herself enraptured with their sheer manliness. And dream Hermione would be perfectly alright with that.

His moral self bemoaned how these two deviants were going to condemn them all to hell for the perversion of their fantasies.

Rationality and Dreams were both telling Morality to grow the hell up, when Compassion spoke up, admonishing them all

to try to consider Hermione's feelings in all this. How would she feel if she knew of their thoughts of her, of what they wanted to do to her? Compassion asked how they were in anyway different than Ron. Compassion went on to explain what he would do to them all if they hurt Hermione in any way.

The others all always listened to Compassion. He was the one who took over during periods of stress, when Morality was crying, Rationality was gibbering in fear and Dreams was hiding. Compassion did things the others didn't like, but he was in charge by default.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry woke slowly to darkness. The digital clock beside the bed told him it was only 4 am. Of course, to his body clock it was nine in the morning. He was a bit ashamed of what he remembered of the dream he had been having, and was more than a little glad that Hermione could not read his mind. He was also glad that he would not be remembering it too much longer.

After Hermione had left him in the airplane toilet, he had resealed the door and broke down, ashamed of how he had reacted to her kissing him, how he had felt when she said she needed him, and most importantly ashamed that he hadn't been able to tell her how much he needed her.

He noticed that a light was on in the sitting room of the Suite. Rather than try and go back to sleep, he decided to see what was on TV at 4 am in Boston. If nothing else, he could read Luna's book again. He shrugged into one of the Suite's courtesy robes, and opened the door to the sitting room.

He found Hermione seated at a writing table taking notes from a textbook. She looked up and their eyes met.

“Can’t sleep Harry?”

“I’m tired, but can’t sleep.” He sat on the chair on the far side of the writing table. “I can’t stop thinking about what you said on the plane.”

“I meant it Harry.”

“But what did you mean Hermione? Do you need me like you need a pair of shoes, or do you need me like ...” I need you “like you need air?”

“Do I really have to spell it out Harry?”

“Yes please. And use small words.”

She smiled. “You aren’t stupid Harry. Ok. I don’t know if I love you. I know I want to. I know I think I do. I know that when I realized what had been done to us; my only thought was to find you. I ran to my parents who I knew would help, when they couldn’t I came for you myself. You have been the focus of my life since you dragged Ron along to tell me about the Troll. You risked your life for a girl you hardly knew when it would have been so much easier to run away.” She reached across the table and took his hand. “You are far more than a pair of shoes to me Harry. Could I live without you? Perhaps, but I don’t want to. If you return to Hogwarts, I’m going with you. I have way too much time invested in you to let you go off and get yourself controlled again.”

“Your dad is going to kill me.”

“Daddy is angry about what happened to us.” She saw the look on Harry’s face. “Yes, to us. He was livid when I told him what they did to you. You made real points with him when you told him to take me and run. You lost points with me for thinking that I would run however.”

“I never thought you would run. I hoped your father could convince you to run. I knew you wouldn’t for yourself, but you might for him.”

“You two are very much alike.”

“I have to wonder if your dad would appreciate the comparison.”

“Mum tells me that he’s as stupidly noble as you are.”

Harry laughed. “You’re going to have to let me get finished feeling sorry for myself before you can convince me that I’m noble in any way.” The smile left his eyes. “Should we return to Hogwarts?”

“I think we have to. Going to the Salem Academy is an attractive idea, but that would abandon our friends to Riddle’s tender mercies, not to mention what Dumbledore might do to them justifying it as being for the ‘greater good’.”

Harry nodded. “Neville might end up the next ‘Chosen One’. He has been through enough. Ok, it’s August 2nd. We have 29 days to figure out what we are going to do, and get back.”

“28 days. Jet lag the other direction is a whole lot worse.”

“We flew in order to pass for Muggles, going back we could use an International Portkey.”

Hermione shook her head. "I think it would be best to not appear on their radar until we absolutely have to. We shouldn't take the express either. We should get into London on the 30th, you take your apparition test on the 31st, and we'll apparate directly to Hogsmeade, and have a few words with the Headmaster."

"Like, 'Back off Asshole?'"

"Something like that."

A frown crossed Harry's face. "You always do this to me. How did we get from you not coming with me to us making plans for our assault on the castle?"

"I bedazzled you with my brilliance." She said smiling.

"Yeah that was hard. Next you'll be distracting me with pieces of string or shiny objects."

Her smile got wider, "Or I could do this:" she released his hand and moved her hand to behind his head, pulling him into a kiss as they both leaned across the table. Harry had fleeting thoughts of stopping this, but her tongue found entry to his mouth, and much like the kiss on the plane, he mind quit noticing anything but her mouth.

After an eternity of bliss, Hermione broke the kiss and his mind started working again.

"Wow. Ok, I'm distracted. You're right, kissing you wasn't like that before. You were right on the plane, something has changed."

“Maybe we’ve grown up.” She noticed the book in his hand.
“What is that?”

“Luna gave it to me when she brought your parents to the Suite in London. She said I would need it. It’s just a book about Pure Blood Wedding rituals and lineage laws. I don’t know why she thought I’d need it, but some of the traditions are kind of weird.”

“May I?”

Harry nodded and handed her the book. She opened it and got that focused look that told him the conversation was over.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Albus Dumbledore was angry. No student had defied him like this since Tom Riddle. He fixed the Weasley matriarch with a withering glare.

“Ginevra, why did you write any of our plans down in your diary? I would have thought that you would have had enough of diaries your first year.”

“I’m sorry Headmaster. I thought that Hermione was too much of a friend to go snooping in my personal things.

“Ronald, I believe you were instructed to keep Miss Granger completely enthralled.”

“I did. She was mine, body and soul. If I asked for it, she gave it too me. It must have been the shock of reading about it in Ginny’s diary. Even the deepest thrall of the potion never dulled her mind.”

And you Nymphadora, you had the relatively simple task to capturing two untrained children, one disfigures and nearly kills you, and the other has you delivered to the Ministry for causing a disturbance at Gringotts.”

“I would have liked to see you do better Headmaster.” Tonks spat from under the hood of her cloak. “Oh wait, it was your fault this all started in the first place wasn’t it? He got to Gringotts by way of the oddball elf of his. The elf works for you doesn’t he? Ask him.”

“Dobby?”

The elf appeared before the Headmaster. “Yes Headmaster Dumbledore Sir?”

“Dobby, I need to find Harry Potter. Could you tell me where he is?”

“Harry Potter sir ask Dobby not to say where he is.”

“I’m afraid I must insist you tell me Dobby.”

“No, Headmaster Dumbledore sir. Harry Potter sir asks Dobby not to tell, Dobby will not tell.”

“You are bonded to the castle Dobby. That means you must obey the Headmaster.”

“Dobby is not bonded to the Hoggy castle. Dobby is free elf. Dobby is paid.”

“Dobby, you will tell me what I want to know.” He drew his wand.

Dobby raised his hands and a wave of force shoved Dumbledore and his desk into the far wall. Various trinkets, silver mechanisms, and portraits fell to the floor.

“Headmaster Dumbledore sir not be threatening Dobby. Dobby good elf. Dobby keep Harry Potter Sirs secrets. Dobby Free Elf. Dobby Quit!” With a pop, the elf was gone.

The Headmaster picked himself up and straightened his office with a gesture. “That could have gone better.”

“How long will they be under the potions thrall? I mean if we can find them and reassert control...”

“Ginevra, for a normal magic user the daily dose that they were receiving would be active for a week, maybe more. But Mr. Potter and Miss Granger are anything but normal magic users. It is more than likely they burned completely through the potion by this morning, sooner if they were very angry, which given their personalities they probably were. We will have to obliviate their memories and start again when we retrieve them.”

“We need to find them now.” Ron hissed. “Potter is not getting my woman.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Luna Lovegood sat under a tree in front of her home humming to herself. Harry had chosen Salem, Hermione had chosen to stay with Harry. Possibilities on the decision tree had pruned. They had tentatively decided to return to Hogwarts, though Harry still had reservations about it if he could not guarantee Hermione’s safety. He had read her

book, but hadn't make the association. Fortunately, Hermione was reading it now and she would make the association. The question was would she act on it.

The possibilities for futures that did not end in fire and blood required them to take the proper steps, and none of the possibilities would allow her to interfere anymore than she already had.

Still, there were several chances of Luna becoming more involved. Several of those ended in tears. Some had her there for the final confrontation. One had Hermione Granger killing her. That one made her especially sad, she liked Hermione very much. Several others had Hermione loving her like a sister. There was no longer any chance of her ending up with the man she loved, so it was time to cut her losses and move on. Hopefully she was on one of the 7 paths that led her to love.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry went through the statement from the Bank again.

The local Gringotts branch had gotten them a furnished house and had it ready for them when they drove up from Boston. The kitchen was stocked, towels in the bathrooms, in short it was as if the previous owners had left it taking only their clothing.

Back to the statements. Over the years Dumbledore had been making substantial withdrawals from several of his accounts. The last was on the 3rd of July a 7,000 galleon withdrawal was made from the primary Potter Family vault, signed for by Albus Dumbledore and listed as tuition

expenses, but an automatic withdrawal from his trust vault was made on the 31st for 1,500 for his tuition.

“What’s all this?”

Harry looked up into Anne Granger’s eyes. “The Goblins were hinting about oddities about my accounts, these are all the transactions made in the last 16 years.”

“This is quite a bit of money. Do you have any experience in accounting?”

“No, it’s not something Hogwarts offers.”

“Of course it isn’t, it’s just a useful skill that people all need to keep body and soul together. Sad. Tell you what, after dinner I’ll sit down with you and go through this.”

“Deal!” She ruffled his hair. “So what would you like for dinner.”

“You don’t have to cook Harry.”

“I need to do something. My relatives liked to eat, so they made sure I knew how to cook. Let me see what’s in the cupboards for what I can come up with.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Dinner was lasagna garlic bread and a salad. He found some very nice sausage in the refrigerator and made the sauce from scratch. Not too bad he thought probably only get three complaints from Vernon for fixing ‘foreign muck’ while he was shoveling it down his neck

The Grangers each took a single bite and looked at him in amazement.

“Something wrong? Too much garlic? I always put in too much garlic.”

“This is wonderful.” Said Anne. “When you said you could cook, I assumed...”

“If he can cook other dishes like this, I’m keeping him.” Hermione remarked to her father.

“If you keep him, I’m eating at your house.”

“It’s only lasagna.” He said shyly. “I made cheesecake for afters.”

Andrew perked up. He nudged his daughter. “I’m definitely eating at your house.”

Chapter Seven – The Father of the Bride

Harry was still going over the records that he got from Gringotts. Anne had shown him how to balance the statement, and he was working through 16 years worth of statements.

He was three pages into the Black accounts when he found something... different. Rather than financial statements he found several pages of obligations and life debts TO Lord Black. Since Sirius left the title to him, to him. The list went on and on. He recognized so many of the names. An idea formed. He reached for Hermione's dictionary. He needed to know precisely what a couple of these terms meant.

He took a piece of parchment and wrote a carefully worded note. He would be requesting a meeting with one of his account managers tomorrow. He also needed to find information on pureblood obligations and traditions.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione had also made a discovery. She needed to confirm a few things, if her time in the wizarding world had taught her anything it was to never accept what a single book said as gospel. Finding at least three confirming references would make her feel better. Luna's book on British Pureblood marriage and traditions was interesting, but it was from Luna. Fortunately, there were some excellent book stores here in Salem. Hopefully they would have ready access to books on the subject. She was not sure she would have time to order. If Luna's book was accurate, they were going to have to return to England a week earlier than they had been planning. Her father was not going to like this. She

suspected Harry would not either. As for herself, she was not sure how she felt about her idea. It was her idea after all...

...---ooo000ooo---...

Still it was going to take some research, the whole 'pureblood' thing never took much hold in North America, which wasn't to say that everything was joyful and happiness here, they fought, it had been explained to her, about other things.

They had a grading system of one to ten for magical potential. Not for power level, but for the potential levels of Magic a person might have. Those scoring in the lower levels were looked down upon. Level one was the theoretical levels of Muggles (or Mundanes as they were called here) Squibs tended to score in the twos and threes. The ability to use magic appeared at level 4. The system in place here was odd really. Muggles (Mundanes) were held in a high esteem (like a backward people heroically struggling against their disadvantages), while squibs and low potential magic users were considered to be beneath notice UNLESS they had abandoned the magical world and lived as a Mundane, then they were heroes leading their oppressed relatives from the darkness. North America was very different when compared to Britain. As much as she disliked the system in place back home, there was something... off about the culture here. She knew that this place did have one saving grace at least as far as Harry was concerned, almost no one knew who he was, and the few who did, didn't really give a damn about his being a 'chosen one', the majority of those few being more interested in the possibility of his having a professional Quidditch career.

At Hermione's insistence she and Harry had gone to the Salem Academy just to check things out. They received a somewhat cool reception from the Headmistress, who assigned one of the teachers to show them around. As part of the tour, they were shown the testing apparatus used to determine one's magical potential. Upon their arrival at the testing room the Headmistress appeared and offered to have them tested. "To see what Hogwarts produces" Following her scan, the Headmistress suddenly became very interested in providing a place for them at Salem. Then they scanned Harry. And they scanned him again. Then a third time. No one wanted to tell Harry his score and he was getting angry. While he was distracting them, she snuck a look at his read out. No numbers like hers when she got my 8.7. His simply said 'Merlin Class'. The Headmistress changed the subject of their discussion, offering a full scholarship and guaranteed acceptance to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Magic. This sudden offer set off Harry's new found manipulation detector, they excused themselves and left the grounds of the school.

····ooo000ooo---

Harry and Hermione met up with Anne at the entrance to the Wizarding shopping district. Andrew had discovered a local golf course he liked quite a bit, and was out playing. Harry had asked Anne to come with him to the local Gringotts branch. He needed to speak with the goblins and Anne spoke their language, money.

Hermione on the other hand wanted to visit some bookstores. Anne and Harry both pretended to be shocked that Hermione might want to visit a bookstore. Hermione just huffed at the pair of them over lunch, and then agreeing to meet in two hours, she left to do her shopping.

···---ooo000ooo---...

“Could I help you miss?”

The store manager had spotted another lover of books.

“ I’m looking for information about British Pureblood Marriage traditions.”

“We don’t have much on Pureblood traditions, you’d have to look pretty hard to find one around here, but we do have a fair sized community of Brit ex pats, so let me see what I can find.” He busied himself in his card catalog. “So how are you finding us here? It’s always interesting to hear opinions from the mother country.”

It is lovely here, the people are friendly, and you have the most wonderful shops. You could teach the shopkeepers something back home. I don’t think I’ve ever had so much help in shops.”

“I heard that before. I’m not sure how you could stay in business without making your customers happy, but then again, over there you’ve got businesses that have been in the same building with the same family running it for centuries. I suppose that would keep too many new ideas from creeping in.” He pulled a card from his index and referencing it pulled a book from one of the huge shelves filling the shop.

“Here we go. I do not normally stock anything on this topic, but one of your young noblemen ordered this while on holiday’ over here, hiding from your Voldemort fellow. The

little twit was attempting to show a few of our local young ladies why they should swoon at his feet. After he laid hands on one of the girls and she beat the crap out of him, followed by her boyfriend and her father. Last I heard he moved on to safer locales and never picked up his special order. Since I'll likely never sell the silly thing, I can let you have it at my cost." Which was bookseller language for 'this is my insanely high inflated price that I charge tourists and other fools, what's your insultingly low counter offer?'

····ooo000ooo---

After a most enjoyable bartering session for her new book, Hermione had ensconced herself at the restaurant where she was to meet Harry and her mother, ordering coffee and a muffin. When her order arrived, she began to read. This book agreed with the one Luna gave Harry. This was their solution. Now she could ensure that they would both be as safe as possible from Dumbledore and his potions.

Her mother sat at the table across from her.

"Where's Harry?"

"He got some disturbing news when going over his obligations and debts as head of the Black family."

"What is it Mum?"

"There is an outstanding Marriage Contract. I'm amazed that such a thing is even legal, but the Goblin person says it is. Hermione, I'm serious, it's like the entire magical world is stuck in the 19th century."

“A Marriage contract? With whom?”

“The Greengrass Family. Specifically a class mate of yours, Daphne.”

“I’ve had a few classes with Daphne. She’s nice.” Hermione said in a small voice. “A pureblood marriage is more of a business unit than a love match.” She explained, operating on autopilot while she figured out how she felt about this news. “Business alliances, producing a... heir.” Suddenly she knew how she felt about it.

“That’s what the Goblin said. He also said that Harry’s position entitled him to a second wife. One would continue the Potter line, the other, the Black line.”

Hermione looked a bit ill.

“Hermione, he’s not happy about this in the slightest. He looked like someone had hit him, hard.”

“Where did he go?”

“Home I think.”

“I think we should go.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

“Feeling sorry for your self?”

Harry looked up from where he was sitting under a tree in the back yard of the rented house. “Hey Hermione. Sorry

about running out on you. Yeah, I'm pretty much feeling sorry for myself."

"Why? Daphne is beautiful."

"She isn't you."

"Isn't me?" Her eyes narrowed. "Have you been drinking?"

"A bit." He admitted. "Found a bottle in the house. It's ain't Ogdens, but it ain't bad." His face clouded. "I don't know Daphne. I think I've said maybe 20 words to her in 6 years, now I'm legally required to ruin her life like I've ruined yours. I know she's not a nibbler. She's never supported Malfoy or any of the nibblers. She's always been civil to me. Why would her father want to inflict me on his own daughter?"

"I saw the contract. Mum brought a copy home. I have no idea what Sirius' grandfather did for the Greengrass family, but that contract is a work of pure evil. There is a prearranged bride price of 5 Galleons. You have the right to demand any dowry you want. If you really wanted out of it, all you would have to do is demand a billion or so."

"I need to talk to Daphne and her parents."

"I've sent a message through Gringotts. They'll be here tomorrow."

Harry sighed. "You always take care of me Hermione."

····ooo000ooo····...

The meeting was at the Salem Gringotts branch. Hermione had rented the conference room, and paid for the unregistered international portkey. Spot on 5p.m. Daphne and her parents appeared in the conference room.

“Harry, it is good to see you.” Daphne took his hand and led him to her parents. “This is my father Michael Greengrass, and my mother Eve.”

“Mr. Greengrass, Mrs. Greengrass, it is a pleasure to meet you. This is Hermione Granger, my friend and advisor.”

“Miss Granger, it is good to meet you.” Eve Greengrass said “Perhaps we should let the men discuss business.” The two Greengrass women led the protesting witch from the room.

“I want to stay with Harry.”

“Of course you do Hermione, which is why you’re out her with us. This is where the real agreements will be made.”

“Mrs. Greengrass, I’m not prepared to negotiate behind Harry’s back.”

“Not behind his back Hermione.” Said Daphne. “Any agreement will have to be made with Harry and Father, the secret is to present the frame work to them to sign off on.” She smiled. “Harry isn’t spectacularly happy with this situation is he?”

“That’s an understatement.”

“It’s not surprising. You’ve only just gotten him free of being controlled by a potion, and along I come with a new involuntary commitment.”

“Exactly, I mean... Wait, you knew about the potions?”

“It wasn’t hard to figure out. You two were blissfully happy, then you throw him over for the youngest Weasley male.” Her face showed her distaste for the idea of Ron Weasley. “Then less than a week later, Harry is joined at the lips to Ginny Weasley. I mean even if she was his type, which she is not, he isn’t the kind of man to recover so quickly. It would take him at least a month or so to recover.”

“Why didn’t you do or say anything?”

“None of my business. I was unaware that Harry was the new Lord Black, and my betrothed. I didn’t discover that until I reached my majority. Upon learning his importance to my future I immediately set out to free him. I was about 6 hours behind you.”

“So if there is nothing in it for you?”

“Then it’s none of my business. What if he liked the thrall? I mean he was getting frequent sex out of the deal. For a lot of boys that would be an excellent trade.’

“And me?”

“Again, I had no idea how you felt about it. There are quite a few people who purposely dose themselves with love potions, in order to feel more passion than they normally did. How was I to know what you were into?”

She had heard of such things as well. Hermione was flustered with that argument but couldn't think of a counter.

"All right. What did you want to discuss?"

"Harry and how we could go about sharing him."

"Sharing him?"

"Oh come on Hermione. It's obvious that you two are a love match. Do you know how rare that is among wizards?"

"The majority of pureblood marriages are arranged" Eve interjected. "My husband and I were an arranged couple. Love came later. Your friends the Weasleys were a love match, the only one in my year at Hogwarts. Harry's parents were a love match, the only one in their year."

"If you know he loves someone else, why?"

"I'm not looking for love Hermione, that might well come later. I'm looking for children. Mixing the Potter line with the Greengrass line is my goal. Have you considered the danger pureblood culture is in?"

"I'm not sure I understand."

"I am an only child. Mother and Father tried for years, healers couldn't help. They finally had to go to Muggle healers. Draco Malfoy is an only child. The Patil twins are a pair, but only because they were born twins. Their mother had a single pregnancy. Pureblood families are not even replacing themselves. Multiple child families like the

Weasleys are the exception. The vast majority of the pure blood families have a single heir, and that's all. The idiots are breeding for extinction at the same time they reject new blood like your own. I plan to have at least 4 children, all of whom will be purebloods, and teach them of their responsibility to our culture. One of my sons will be the next Lord Black, and from that influential position I can change our world. Open it to the first born witches and wizards."

"Sweet Merlin. How long have you had this planned out?"

"Two years. Harry was one of my candidates, but not high on the list. I was interested in half bloods with at least one first born parent. The healers I've spoken with suspect that the problem is partially a fertility problem with the pureblood males. Then I turn 17, and the Goblins tell me that I have a marriage contract with the current Lord Black. Have you seen the contract?"

"Yes. This is the first time there has been an unattached Lord Black and a female Greengrass at the same time in 123 years."

"Exactly. I propose a partnership. You can be Lady Potter, I will be Lady Black. You will have access to the larger of the two fortunes. The money is nice, but not really my goal. Your son will be Lord Potter, mine Lord Black, bound together for ever by blood. The only possible problem would be if I have no sons. The Black line is patriarchal, only a son can inherit. Perhaps then Lord Black could pass to your son, and Lady Potter to my daughter. We can work that out at our leisure."

"I'm not sure Harry would be interested in me."

“Hermione, you aren’t stupid, don’t waste our time. The man would walk through hell for you. He’s terrified that you are too hurt by that love potion to possibly love him. When he was told about the marriage contract, he tried to crawl into a bottle didn’t he?”

“He had a couple of drinks.”

“Then he only stopped because you spoke with him. My family can help with his problem with Tom Riddle. Father has been building a defense against Voldemort since his first rise to power.”

“I need to speak with Harry.”

····ooo000ooo---

“Mr. Greengrass, we can’t do this. Daphne associating herself with me will just paint a huge target on her back.”

“Lord Black, my daughter has her heart set on this.”

“Then it must be Lord Black she has her heart set on, because I don’t think we’ve exchanged 2 dozen words since first year. I doubt she even knows my name.”

“Daphne has inherited her mother’s bearing. Let me guess, you see her as a beautiful unobtainable goddess?”

Harry smiled. “Close.”

“I have heard about the adventures of Harry Potter since your first year. She knows your name Harry. She especially

loves it when you humiliate some of the arrogant purists in her house.”

“I’m not anti-Slytherin sir.”

“Harry, I’m a Ravenclaw. My wife was the Slytherin. You don’t have to apologize to me for taking those arrogant prats down a peg or three.” He smiled at a private memory. “Daphne is fully aware of your situation and wants to be an assist to your mission. Our survival depends on your actions. Daphne doesn’t want to replace Miss Granger, she wants to join the two of you. You’ve lost one of the legs of your trio, Daphne wants to become that third leg. She wants to be your second wife.” He smiled again at the look on the boys face. He’s faced Voldemort and he’s frightened by the idea of two women? “She sees you has her path to saving the Wizarding culture. To save the culture, she is willing to risk the war.”

Harry sighed. “When are we doing the wedding?”

“ I was thinking after you take your seats on the Wizengamot. The last Monday in August? Call it 3 pm? What did you want for a dowry?”

“Mr. Greengrass, I have no idea. How about you give her what you want her to have?”

“I forget you are Muggle raised and don’t really know our ways. The dowry signifies status. I’ll make sure it is an appropriate amount.”

···---ooo000ooo---...

Harry wouldn't meet Hermione's eye when they were walking home after the meeting.

"Harry..."

"They insist on going through with it Hermione. I can't see anyway out of it without becoming the kind of arrogant ass I hate. I know she doesn't love me. I don't understand."

"She thinks you're fertile. She sees you as a path to power. She wants children and the ability to change the Wizarding society, she sees you as a partner who can help her with that. She wants to be your second wife."

"Second? Her father said the same thing."

"She intends to be Lady Black. She expects me to be Lady Potter."

Harry was stunned at that. "What do you expect?"

"The book Luna gave us spoke of the protections of marriage. If we were married, any one who attempted what Dumbledore did to us would be facing at very least live in Azkaban. Most are executed outright."

"So you think we should get married?"

"There's a type of trial marriage called Hand Fasting. It lasts a year and a day. At the end of that time, either party can just walk away." Tears were in her eyes. "That would give us the protections we're looking for Harry."

Harry nodded and thought for a moment.

“I need to think about this for a while Hermione. If you don’t mind, I’m going to take a walk and think.”

“I could come with you...”

“No, please. I need to do this alone.” He kissed her lightly and walked away in the direction they had come from.

····ooo000ooo---

“Where’s Harry?”

“I’ve bollixed everything up Mum.”

“What happened?”

“The Greengrasses are going ahead with the marriage contract. Daphne wants to use his position to further her plans for the Wizarding culture. It’s a good plan, it might work. But she made it clear that she only planned to be the second wife, both she and her parents assumed that I would be the first. Harry asked what I thought about it, and I didn’t answer him, instead I started talking about that trial marriage I found in the book Luna gave him and how it would offer us protection under the Linage laws. Harry said he needed to go off and think. He kissed me and left.”

“That doesn’t mean he doesn’t love you Hermione. He does love you, trust me on that. It means he’s 17 and suddenly he has to think about marriage seriously”

····ooo000ooo---

“Mr. Granger?”

“Harry. How are you this fine morning?”

“I didn’t really sleep all that well. Going to play golf?”

“Yep. Want to come?”

“Yes please. I would. I’ll probably be really horrible, will that distract you?”

“Someone I can beat? Not at all. Why don’t we make it interesting, Say \$10 per hole?”

…---ooo000ooo---...

“You hustled me.”

“Mr. Granger I have never touched a golf club before today.”

“You hustled me.”

“Mr. Granger I didn’t win every hole.”

“You won 16 of 18 holes. You hustled me.

Crap. “Mr. Granger I would like to ask for your permission to ask Hermione to marry me.”

“That’s \$140. But I’m going to stick you with the bar bill, so you’re going to…” It sank in. “Marry Hermione?”

“Yes sir.”

“No. Not today. Not tomorrow. Never.” He got up and left the 19th hole.

Crap

...---ooo000ooo---...

Andrew Granger stormed into the house and straight into his bedroom, slamming the door behind him. Hermione and Anne watched as he went through the sitting room without a word.

“Didn’t Harry go with him?”

“He’s not in the car Mum.”

Anne followed her husband into the bedroom. She found him in the shower. “Where’s Harry?”

He ignored her. She flushed the toilet, the temperature in the shower immediately spiked to scalding. Andrew yelped and jumped out of the shower.

“What the bloody hell was that for?”

“I believe we discussed you ignoring me the first year we were married. Where is Harry?”

“I left him at the golf course.”

“Why?”

“He pissed me off.”

“By doing what?”

“He... He. He asked me if he could ask Hermione to marry him.”

“The Bastard.” She maintained eye contact. “And you answered?”

“I said no.”

“You did? Do you hate your daughter? Do you want her to leave us and not come back?”

“What?”

“If you force her to choose between Harry and us, who do you suppose she will choose?” She shook her head. “Andy, he asked you for permission to ask her. Didn’t that mean anything to you? Did you do that with my father? No you didn’t. They are both of age in the magical world, they don’t need our permission, but he asked you anyway. For god’s sake Andy, what are you thinking?”

“I..”

“Don’t tell me, tell Hermione. I’m going to see if I can find Harry.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Anne didn't find Harry, he was no where near the golf course, she drove about for an hour and never spotted him. She returned to find an angry Andy and a hysterical Hermione screaming at her father. She calmed Hermione as best she could.

····ooo000ooo---

Harry finally showed up at 11pm, entering quietly so as to not disturb those sleeping within. The door had hardly closed behind him when he was hit in the chest by a bushy haired missile.

She covered him with kisses and tears until she calmed down enough to yell at him for disappearing like that.

"Damn you Harry Potter. What did you think you were doing? Just because Daddy said that to you doesn't mean you go off on your own, you come her and talk to me." Tears falling. "Daddy doesn't get a vote. Mum gives you permission to ask. Ask me damn it."

"Hermione, will you marry me for a year and a day? I'd ask for forever but your dad will probably kill me." He smiled that crooked grin that took her breath away "A year and a day should give you enough time to wise up and leave."

"I'll marry you for a year and a day Harry Potter, and if you think on that 366th day you can walk away, you've got some more thinking to do."

····ooo000ooo---

The altar was decorated with an abundance of flowers. A pair of wrapped gifts lay at the base of the altar. Harry looked to Andrew, giving him a last chance to forbid this. Andrew reached over and squeezed Harry's shoulder.

"Go ahead Harry, you have our blessing."

Hermione lit the light white candle before her and looked expectantly to Harry. He smiled and lit his white candle. This was what Hermione wanted; he would do his best to make her happy.

Harry calmed himself and recited:

"May the place of this rite be consecrated by our magic. For we gather here in a ritual of love with we two who would be wed. For a year and one day, Hermione Jane and Harry James stand before the Eternal Forces of Life and of Nature.
"

Hermione looked into his eyes and smiled:

"Be with us here, O beings of the Air and with your Clever Fingers tie closely the bonds between us two who would be bound. "

She lit a stick of jasmine incense.

Harry lit the red candle in front of him

"Be with us here, O beings of the Fire give our love and passion, your all consuming ardor "

Hermione raised a goblet of wine to Harry's lips, then drank from it herself

“Be with us here O beings of the Water give to us two who desire it the deepest of love and depth of body, soul and spirit “

Harry scattered a handful of salt around the alter

“Be with us here O beings of the Earth lend your strength and constancy to us for as long as we desire to be together “

Together they recited:

“Blessed Goddess and Laughing God we invoke Thee! Give to us Your Unconditional Love and Your Ever Vigilant Protection! “

Harry placed the two rings on his wand, holding it in his right hand over the rings, Hermione placed her left hand over his, and he recited:

“Above us the stars, below us the stones. As Time doth pass remember...

Like a star above should our love be constant, like a stone below should our love be strong Remember to weather the threatening storms they pass ever quickly and wash away wrong Make love ever often as we both so desire the world may grow cold but can freeze not our Fire Be us close although separate though ever together, each possessing the other thru Will not thru Law Strengthen each other the length of our union the God and the Goddess are with us Always. “

Hermione waited five heartbeats

“It is my wish to become one with Harry James Potter.”

“ It is my wish to become one with Hermione Jane Granger.”

Together they said:

“By Our Magic and all those who witness this rite we are now proclaimed Husband and Wife! “

Harry lifted his gift to Hermione from the altar. “Hermione as long as I’ve known you, you’ve been my friend and guide. This will show what you have done for me.”

Hermione handed the other package to Harry. “Harry the first time I met you I asked if you had seen a toad. I spent much of the next 5 years nagging you to do your homework, and still you stood by me. You have protected me, you have needed me and you have shown me a life I never would have had without you. I cannot thank you enough for the life I have now, warts and all.” She smiled. “This is my offer of what you have never had.”

···---ooo000ooo---...

A/N: My, that was soppy. I know I suck at romantic scenes, no need to tell me.

Chapter Eight – The Return

Harry was nervous. The prospect of returning to Britain was weighing on him. Were they making a mistake? He and Hermione needed to be at the airport at 8am for their flight home, so they were spending the night at the airport Hilton.

Harry was nervous. The idea of taking the seats on the Wizengamot worried on him. There was so much he didn't know about how things were done there. He and Hermione intended to visit Neville and try to get a crash course on protocol from his grandmother. She seemed far too independent to be reporting to Dumbledore. Hermione had agreed with him that the possible gain was worth the risk.

Harry was nervous. His second marriage was only 6 days away, since the meeting with Daphne and her parents he had been imagining all the possible ways he could go about screwing this up. On the other hand, would his relationship with Daphne screw everything up with Hermione? What if he was a disappointment to both of them?

Harry was nervous. It was his wedding night. Hermione was in the bath preparing for bed now. He had no idea what she wanted from him, and was far too embarrassed to even consider asking. What if he didn't measure up to Ron? It was not until he had been preparing for bed he realized that he had no pajamas. He had not worn them for years, having found boxers and a t-shirt to be more convenient, that was now all he owned. The water still ran in the bath. He did a quick inventory, teeth brushed, deodorant on, freshly shaved, body clean. Good. Oh god. The water stopped. He now knew that he had had sex before, but those times he thought it was all a dream, and honestly, he had not done anything; just lay there in a fog. On the other hand, Hermione had

been an active participant in her sex life, even though controlled. He had no idea what to do. He did not know how to start... how to suggest... what she wanted from him... if anything at all.

The door to the bath opened just a crack.

“Harry? Could you turn the lights off please?”

“Sure Hermione, just a sec.” he reached over to the bedside table and turned the light off. The door opened fully and she stood, silhouetted in the light from the bath for a second before she switched that light off and crossed the room in the darkness and slid into the bed beside him.

“I’m ready.” She said.

Tentatively his hand found hers in the dark.

“I don’t know what you want me to do.” He whispered.

“We need to consummate the marriage, or the magical bindings fail.”

“I don’t care about that Hermione. Tell me what you want me to do.”

Is Harry rejecting me? Can’t he bring himself to touch me? Oh God! She rolled over exploring his body with her hands. She freed him from his boxers. “Ron liked it when I did this.” she ducked her head toward his groin.

Harry took her face in his hands and pulled her into a kiss. “I don’t care what Ron liked. I don’t want to know what Ron did

to you, because if you tell me I will have to kill him. I have no idea what I'm doing here. I need you to tell me what you want from me. I will never do anything you don't want me to do; I will never come to you uninvited. I love you Hermione."

"Hold me?"

He wrapped her in his arms and drew her close. He was very aware of how little cloth separated them. She tucked her face into his neck and began to cry. He pulled her to him as tightly as he dared, his left hand tracing random patterns on her back, wishing with all his might that his erection would go away

After a long while her sobbing subsided and she pulled her face away from his neck, his eyes had adjusted well enough to see her eyes glittering with tears.

"I'm sorry Harry."

"What could you possibly be sorry for?"

"I don't blame you for not wanting me. I'm used. I'm dirty."

"Are you trying to make me angry?"

"What?"

"I can't tell you how much I want you. You are not dirty Hermione. Ron raped you. Do you care about what Tonks did with me?"

"You didn't know."

“That just goes to show what an idiot you saddled yourself with. You were fully aware of what Ron was doing to you and I stupidly thought it was all just a wet dream.”

“I liked it Harry. I liked everything we did.”

“Of course you liked it Hermione, that’s how the potion works. He could have beaten you bloody and you would have enjoyed it. When you discovered what was going on, did you go to Ron for more? No, you got out. You are the smartest person I know. Don’t blame yourself for things you had no control over.”

She opened her mouth to argue, Harry kissed her. She was startled for a moment, and then returned the kiss.

“Could we cuddle for a while?”

“You read my mind. I love you Hermione.”

…---ooo000ooo---...

At some point, they both fell asleep. Hermione woke at 4am by the LED clock on the side table. There was someone in bed with her, spooned into her back. Her first thought was that it was Ron and a wave of anger washed over her, then memory came back.

Harry.

She had married Harry.

He had not taken her as Ron had. He had not been ready either. His excitement had been more than evident, but he

asked her what she wanted to do. He had held her while she cried, and told her what she needed to hear. She has asked him to cuddle and despite his erection, he had pulled her into his arms and hadn't tried anything. She was still in his arms. It was hard to believe the level of safety she felt with Harry holding her. She suddenly noticed how wet she was. Making a decision. She rolled to face him.

“Harry?”

“Mmf?”

“Harry do you love me?”

“Course I do ‘mione. I have since second year.”

“Make love to me Harry.”

“Mmf?”

Hermione leaned into him, and lightly bit his lower lip. “Make love to me, please? I want, I need you inside me.”

That woke Harry up. “Are you sure?”

“I’ve never been more sure of anything in my live Harry.” She rolled on top of him, pulling the nightgown over her head. She took hold of him and guided him into her body. His hands found her breasts and she used her own to pull them tighter. “I love you Harry Potter.”

····ooo000ooo---

Albus Dumbledore was an angry man. Not satisfied with ruining almost two decades of carefully made plans for the Potter line, that insufferable boy had directed the Goblins of Gringotts to repossess the items he had 'borrowed' from the Potter and Black vaults. Portraits, suits of armor, magical devices and antiques all disappeared from the halls and classrooms of Hogwarts; with bills for the restoration of the items to the condition they left the vault in left in their places. Among the items retrieved were his office desk, his bed, a collection of antique wands and staves, and possibly worst of all, the golden throne on which he sat in the Great Hall.

They had taken everything, even the things on loan from the Potter and Black families for centuries. His furious letter stating that Phineas Nigellus Black had loaned some of the items during his term as Headmaster was answered by a one line message.

'They were not loaned by the current Lord Black, who has directed their retrieval.'

Now the Potter and Black account managers were demanding a full accounting of the monies withdrawn by Dumbledore since October 1981. This could be disastrous. He needed to contact the Order. Potter had to be found immediately, no matter the cost.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Daphne Greengrass sat alone in her room pondering the path she found her self upon. She did not even have chance or luck to blame for her fate, she had planned each step along the way. If it had not been Harry, it would have been one of the other Halfbloods on her list.

While it was all just a plan, it had been good. Daphne had spent hours of each detail of the plan. Finding the right man, learning to exploit his assets while adding to them. Convincing him that multiple children were what their relationship needed. Ensuring that each child (she had the possible names for her future children on page 28 of the plan, with variations for each of the possible men. Her first child with Harry Potter would be either Michael James (for her father and his), or Sarah Lillian (for her maternal grandmother and his mother))

Now however, the 'plan' was becoming life. Her wedding was only a few days off. Harry's magic was surrounding her, caressing her, soothing her, touching her. With any luck this feeling would last forever. Once the contract was executed, it could be broken only by one of them dying. Harry had dangerous enemies, and evidently dangerous friends. Harry? When had he become Harry? What was happening to her?

She stood and examined her reflection in the mirror. Long Black hair, perfect figure, perky breasts, perfect, as always. Like most beautiful women, her few minor flaws drew her attention, but she knew that few noticed them, seeing instead the illusion of perfection. Would Harry be pleased? She reflected on the women in his life. Granger of course, not a beauty but pretty enough. An average figure. A steel trap mind. Weasley. She was a classical beauty. Red hair, something that did something to some men. Not much of a figure, just a waif, but that did something to some men as well. No reputation for being all that smart. Lovegood. That one made no sense at all. Not particularly pretty, no real figure, a classic plain girl, supposed to be frighteningly

brilliant. Cho. An exotic beauty. Fabulous figure, extremely intelligent. How would she measure up in Harry's eyes?

Why did she care? She had been using boys and men since she realized she could. Why was she so hesitant to use Harry? And why the hell was she thinking of him as Harry? She had always thought of boys and men by their surnames. But this was... Harry.

Harry. A bloody Gryffindor. Harry. Damn it.

Not for the first time she wondered when she would share his bed. That was something she had not ever done. He would want to have her.

Would Granger share? Would it be just Harry and herself, or the three of them? Could she deal with another woman touching her? Could she touch another woman?

Where had that come from? Why was she thinking that?

What the hell is going on?

What the hell kind of magic was in that contract anyway?

...---ooo000ooo---...

Tom Riddle was perplexed. Something was happening in Dumbledore's camp, but it made no sense.

Potter and his pet Mudblood disappeared from their respective relative's home and Dumbledore had rallied his pathetic order to find them. Riddle knew that this had nothing to do with his operations. Could this have something to do

with the slave and control potions that Severus had reported brewing for the old man?

Riddle began to laugh, had Potter discovered what the old man was capable of? Had the old fool done to Potter what he had done to Riddle at the same age? When Riddle's magic had burned through the thrall, he had killed the girl controlling him. Was the Granger girl dead now?

No, Dumbledore, in his own way as pureblood centric as Riddle, would never trust a mudblood with such a task. It would have been a pureblood. The Weasley girl perhaps. No reports of her death, perhaps Potter had run rather than confront his thrall holder. He and the boy were much alike in their youth, but Potter was still unwilling to kill. That weakness made his destruction inevitable.

····-ooo000ooo---...

Ron Weasley wandered the grounds near the Burrow. Hermione had been gone for almost a month. For a month, he had been without her. Without her mouth, without her willing body, without Hermione. It was driving him mad.

Fucking Potter had her. Fucking Potter was making use of his woman.

When she returned to school, she would be his. And she would return to school Hermione cared more about school than anything.. He would take her again, and he would not use a potion either. She would be his, or she would be no ones.

····-ooo000ooo---...

Eve Greengrass listened to her daughter's worries, more than a little surprised. She had thought that Daphne understood what she was getting involved in.

"I thought you understood the contract Daphne."

"I read it at least a dozen times prior to the meeting Mum. It's the contract that's doing this to me? His magic is so strong. It gets stronger every day."

"Yes. It is doing things to young Mr. Potter as well, but mostly to you. You are executing the contract, he is bound to it. Your shared magic is changing you to more suit him, it is changing him to better accommodate you. Very different things. You describe a sudden awareness of Hermione Granger. She is bound to him by love. The magic shared between yourself and Harry is binding you to her as well." Seeing the look on her daughter's face, she continued, "the magic will not make you a lesbian, nor will it make you bisexual, but you will love and trust her as he does."

"What changes will he experience?"

"He will know, but not experience your emotions. He will know when you are frightened, when you are happy, when you are sad." Once again, the look on her daughter's face almost made her smile. "There are worse things Daphne. He will know your feelings, you will experience his. The magic is preparing you now. You will no longer be capable of thinking of him as an abstract. Once the contract is finalized he will be the focus of your thoughts until you replace him with your children."

“Do I have any options in this?”

Eve shook her head. “Daphne, if you finalize the contract that is how it will be. You can still walk away, the contract gives you that option, and it will be passed on to the next generation of the House of Greengrass, a daughter of one of your cousins perhaps.” She kissed her daughter on her forehead. “The Black contract is very different from the arrangement that your grandparents made for your father and me. This is substantially more bonding. Ours was a business merger; this one takes you into an ancient family with much power and much responsibility. Becoming Lady Black this way will mean submerging much of yourself to Harry Potter, at least for a time.”

“This way?”

“You have the option of foregoing the contract and returning to Hogwarts unmarried to attempt to spark a love match. Given that you are in different houses and have a different social circle, that seems unlikely to work, but it is an option.”

····-ooo000ooo---...

“Something is going on Brother.”

“I know. Ron’s a psycho, Ginny is a basket case, been that way since Hermione disappeared.

“This has Harry written all over it.”

“Notice how we were excluded from the search for them?”

“One would think they don’t trust us at the Order.”

“Why would anyone think we would care more about what Harry wanted?”

“It might be possible that they don’t trust us.”

“Perish forbid!”

“Any ideas Brother?”

“Some. With Harry, it’s usually best for him to come to us.”

“Then we help him.”

“Of course. Screw the Order”

“You know,” Alicia Spinnet looked up from the accounts receivable book. “It’s sort of creepy when you guys do that.”

“Sorry” the twins intoned in unison...

...---ooo000ooo---...

“Potions? They used potions on you?”

“Yes they did Neville. We were completely controlled for almost ten months.” Hermione brushed some errant strands of hair out of her eyes. “I still wake up wondering where he is.”

“Why are you coming back? I mean both of your scores would guarantee your acceptance at any school anywhere in the world.”

“If we went somewhere else we would be letting the bastards win. We would also be leaving all of our friends exposed to Tom and his Merry Men.” Harry looked pensive, “Besides, if we aren’t at Hogwarts I couldn’t kick Ron Weasley’s ass.”

“Gran would like you both to stay for dinner. She also said that she would love to tutor you in the protocols of the Wizengamot.”

“That sounds great Neville.”

“Yes it does Nev. Just to warn you, we won’t be on the Express, We’ll be making an entrance.”

“I’ll make sure to get a good seat.”

“If you gentlemen will excuse me for a second? I need to use the facilities.”

Waiting until Hermione had left the room, Neville turned to Harry “So, Daphne Greengrass? You and the Ice Princess?”

“I guess.”

“It’s your own fault. Being so damned rich and desirable.”

“Oh, Nev, you’re a card. Don’t forget laughing boy, you’re pretty damned rich too.”

“That’s why I’m setting my sights on a certain Hufflepuff. Gorgeous AND loyal. Who could ask for more than that?”

····ooo000ooo---

“Nervous Harry?”

“A bit Mr. Greengrass. It isn’t everyday one takes a seat in the Wizengamot.”

“Or gets married?”

“Or that.”

“Daphne has some concerns her self.”

“Dad!”

“Daphne, if you don’t want too...”

She took his left hand in both of hers and raised it to her mouth for a kiss. “No Harry, I want to marry you more than I can say. It’s just that your magic is so overwhelming...”

“My magic?”

“Harry’s magic is affecting you?”

“ Oh yes Hermione. When we accepted the contract together his magic started to interact with mine, to help me become more suitable for him.”

Hermione and Harry were both horrified. “Daphne, that sounds far too much like the potions Dumbledore and the Weasley’s used on Hermione and Me. Surely you don’t want to be changed to suit me?”

“This is so much what I want Harry. The focus on you is only temporary, it fades with time. No more than two or three years.”

Harry and Hermione exchanged looks, she nodded. “Even so, there is no reason for you to do this. If it’s important to you, we can go ahead with the marriage and forgo the contract. We could just marry, like Hermione and I did. Giving up your individuality, even for a short time is far too high a price.”

She rubbed the back of his hand against her cheek and sighed. “Harry, this bonding is what I want, really it is.” She smiled serenely “Your magic is amazing. It’s been getting stronger every day. At first I thought it was because you were getting closer, but it’s been getting stronger all day. Just been like a constant cheering charm. Hermione, you wouldn’t believe this. His magic is just wonderful.”

“Harry? We need to be going.”

“Thank you Mr. Greengrass. Are you ladies coming?”

“I think we should stay here.” Hermione said. Daphne and I need to get better acquainted.”

····ooo000ooo---

“Mr. Potter, Mr. Longbottom.”

“Headmaster.” Dumbledore had ambushed Harry and Neville in the hallway outside the Wizengamot chambers.

“Have you any idea what you’ve done?”

“Escaped a pimp? Escaped enslavement? How are your whores anyway?”

“You will mind your place Mr. Potter.”

“I know my place Headmaster. I also know a pimp when I see one.”

“Where is Miss Granger?”

“Since school isn’t in session, I don’t really see how that’s any of your business Headmaster.”

“You will remain in my office and I will return you to your Aunt’s home after this meeting.”

“You may have missed it Headmaster, but I have reached my majority. What ever say you may have had in my life is over. I am an adult, and I chose to ignore your commands.” Several people started paying attention to their discussion.

“Mr. Potter.”

“How’s your office these days you old thief? Fairly empty I would guess from the inventory my account manager forwarded to me. Have you accounted for the monies you have withdrawn from my vaults yet?”

“Why are you here Mr. Potter?”

“Taking my seats on the Wizengamot of course.”

“You will not.”

“As in so many other things, Headmaster, you are wrong.”

“You are still a student.”

“Headmaster, that has nothing to do with my taking my seats. I am heir to two different noble houses. The hereditary seats became available to me when I became 17. My status in school is not addressed by law or custom.” A crowd had gathered watching the ‘discussion’ between the Leader of the Light and the Chosen One. “Your interference in my life is over Headmaster. I am not your servant; I am not bound to you. Keep your whores away from me Pimp.”

He turned on his heel and entered the chamber. Neville followed grinning widely.

···---ooo000ooo---...

The Ceremony for opening a new session of the Wizengamot was a long drawn out affair. The Wizards in their ceremonial robes trooped in after being announced as ‘Lord or Lady so and so.’ In short it was what Harry thought of as a ‘Dog and Pony’ show.

Neville was sitting next to him in the gallery. For once Neville was in his element. His grandmother had been drilling him on the protocol of the legislative house of the Wizing

Government since he could read. Various members were extolling the accomplishments of the previous sessions, droning on and on about things Harry could care less about.

“We’re next” Neville whispered. “Just follow my lead.”

····ooo000ooo····...

“Back so soon Harry?”

“Why yes I am Lady Potter.”

“Oh, congratulations Harry!” Daphne ran to him and pulled him into a hug”

“Daphne, this isn’t anything like you, are you sure you want to do this?”

“More than I could possibly tell you Harry. No, this isn’t what I’ve been like, but I like how I feel, I like being the new me. You are making me so happy.”

“Mr. Greengrass, I’m really concerned about her loss of self”

“This is normal for a contract bonding Harry. Her mother was the same way. Her magic is interacting with yours and she is becoming more compatible for you.”

“ Sir, this is disturbingly like the mind control potions Hermione and I were dosed with. Why should she change for me?”

“Because she is joining you Harry. As the one executing the contract she is the one molding herself to your needs. It has always been this way. Of course her response is an extreme one. Your magic must be extremely strong.”

“I’m sorry sir, but this just seems so wrong.”

“It’s just different than what you are used to Harry. She factored this into her plan.”

Harry sighed. He shared a look with Hermione and she shrugged. “Alright Daphne, what do we do for the ceremony?”

“No ceremony Harry” she giggled. A giggling Slytherin, he never thought he’d ever see that. “As soon as we sign the final contract, we’re bonded.”

Daphne signed in the proper places, then turned to him, and took his face between her hands and kissed him deeply. Harry picked up the pen.

“Are you sure Daphne?”

“More sure than I’ve ever been Harry.”

Harry signed the contract.

“Congratulations Harry. Welcome to the family. You as well Hermione.”

“Come on.” Daphne grabbed his and Hermione’s hand and started pulling them toward the door. “Bye Daddy. Tell Mum I love her.”

Michael Greengrass watched the door close. Just like her mother.

···---ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Nine – Back to School

“Congratulations Harry. Welcome to the family, you as well Hermione.”

“Come on.” Daphne grabbed his and Hermione’s hand and started pulling them toward the door. “Bye Daddy. Tell Mum I love her.”

“So,” said Lady Black. “It’s 4 in the after noon. What should we do now?”

“Dinner?” Harry asked. “Then we can discuss how we’re going to deal with each other and face Hogwarts.”

When they reached the apparition point, Dumbledore’s voice rang out. “Miss Granger!”

“I don’t know any Miss Granger, do you Lady Black?”

“Can’t say that I do, Lady Potter.”

The three teens were gone, leaving behind an angry Albus Dumbledore, and a small crowd of rubber neckers. Also two reporters.

···---ooo000ooo---...

“Well?”

“Wow.” Harry didn’t know much about women’s fashion, but these outfits caused blood flow problems.

“Well, he’s eloquent.” Hermione stood with her hands on her hips.

“Would a wolf-whistle have killed you?”

“I’m not really a wolf-whistle kind of guy Daphne. “ Harry concentrated on trying not to think about that night. “I’m still trying to figure out how I ended up with two beautiful women.” Yeah that was smooth.

That got him odd looks from both of his... wives. This was going to take some getting used to.

“ We can make him squirm later” Hermione said. “I’m hungry, let’s go eat.”

“I’ve never eaten at a Muggle restaurant before. Anything special I should know?”

“ Not really, it just takes longer.” Hermione explained, “Everything has to be prepared after it’s ordered.”

“So, what are you ladies in the mood for? Chinese? Italian? Indian? Thai?”

“What are those?”

Hermione and Harry shared a look, it was easy to forget just how isolated the Wizarding population was.

“They are styles of cooking, from China, Italy, India, and Thailand.”

“I’ve never tried any of them.”

“How about Italian?” Hermione suggested. “We can each get something different and share off each other’s plates.”

Harry hated doing that. He wanted what he ordered, but he had learned over the last month that if you went out to eat with Hermione she ended up sharing off your plate whether you agreed or not. After their second meal out together, he had decided that it was a small price to pay for her company.

····ooo000ooo····

“That was amazing.” Daphne sat back from the table. “I never knew that there were so many flavors. We’ve got to do this again!”

Harry was a bit surprised at how much she could eat; she had plowed through that ravioli plate like a starving lumberjack. For some reason he had been expecting Daphne to eat like a bird.

‘If you want surprising flavors Daphne, next time we’ll try Indian.”

“Ooh, I love Indian. A nice curry is to die for.” Hermione got a dreamy look on her face while spearing the last of Harry’s meatballs with her fork. “Why don’t we go dancing? There’s a club in the hotel, it would be fun.”

“Dancing? I love to dance, but wouldn’t it look odd with there being three of us? What would people think?”

“That I’m the luckiest guy on the planet. If you ladies want to dance, it sounds good to me.” Harry also hated dancing, but again, a small price to pay for the company.

····ooo000ooo---

Justin Finch-Fletchly and Ernie MacMillan entered the club with Justin’s girlfriend and her cousin, neither of the girls knew of magic beyond the attraction that the two men radiated. Over the last two summers, Justin had been teaching Ernie to pass as a Muggle. Their reasoning was simple, there were a lot more Muggle girls. They were celebrating Justin’s new BMW with a drive about town, when the girls spotted the marquee announcing the dance club in the hotel lounge. Knowing that accommodating men are rewarded men; they changed plans and stopped to dance for a while. The foursome found a table, and the girls left to powder whatever women feel the need to powder in groups at a club.

“You feel that Ern?”

“Bloody hell yes. There is a very powerful someone here. It feels like Dumbledore, but different.”

“Who ever it is he’s... Sweet Merlin, is that Potter on the dance floor? He’s with two women!”

“You’re right, it is. Is that Granger? Damn, she cleans up nice.”

“Wait, that’s the Ice Queen with them. Potter and Granger with a Slytherin? What the hell?” They watched in

amazement when Daphne kissed Harry deeply, then Hermione did the same.

The two Hufflepuffs shared a look. That was different.

“I got an Owl from Dumbledore earlier in the month saying that Potter and Granger will be missing and in danger, and that if I saw them I should inform him immediately.”

“I got the same Owl Justin. He doesn’t seem to be in all that much danger to me. It seems to me that the old man is just a little too interested in Harry’s love life.”

“It is Harry that’s radiating magic like that?”

“Harry who?”

“Good point.”

The girls came back to the table, the four were there for three hours, dancing and drinking and having a good time. Arguing that it wasn’t safe to drive any longer, Justin got them a suite in the hotel, where the two ‘puffs lost all thought of Harry Potter in the arms of two affectionate women.

...---ooo000ooo---...

The lift to the 9th floor was just too damned slow. A deep burning passion for Daphne had been building in him since just after they had executed the contract. He clung to Hermione as if she were a lifeline. Several times during their evening, he had seen her staring at him oddly, until sometime after the second round of drinks when a sudden

realization spread across her face. She would not tell him what she had figured out, which was odd unto it's self.

Dancing with Daphne was very different from Dancing with Hermione. She molded herself to him, and he could feel her nipples pressing against his chest when they danced. When they were sitting at their table in a dark corner of the club, she had taken his hand and guided it under her skirt to her sex.

“Touch me Harry.” She whispered before drawing him into a deep kiss. This was much too much like the stories in one of Dean's Muggle magazines. He'd always assumed that those stories were just so much thestral shit, but this was happening.

That had been enough for Hermione; she had insisted that it was time to go. She led them to a (thankfully empty) lift and was guiding them to the suite. Hermione found that she was glad she had researched marriage contracts. This reaction was an extreme one, with both Harry and Daphne reacting out of character, but a heightened sexual response was predicted in most marriage contracts due to magics in place to force consummation as soon as possible.

Daphne had told her of growing power of Harry's magic. It was not focus on her, but even she was beginning to feel it. In Salem, the power level test on Harry had indicated he was 'blocked'. At first, she dismissed that as absurd. Harry was one of the most powerful wizards in his age group, but now, with what she felt in his presence AND how Daphne was reacting to him led her to believe that when exposed to the Daphne's magic, Harry had somehow broken through the blockage, releasing his potential. Of the three of them only

Hermione had the presence of mind to open the door to their suite.

Hermione pried Daphne from Harry's grasp.

"Go, get ready for him."

"I'm ready" the Slytherin growled.

Hermione took Daphne's head in her hands, staring her in the eye. "Remember what you told me. Is this how you want to remember your first night together?"

Daphne's eyes cleared, her breathing calmed a bit. She broke away from Hermione and kissed Harry hard. "Give me 5 minutes."

Harry watched her go, nodding dully.

"You." Harry turned his attention to Hermione. "Go, shower, and brush your teeth. Put on deodorant." She ran her hand across his chin. "Shave."

Harry nodded dully again, staring at the door the Daphne had disappeared behind before going to the other bedroom of the suite to do as he had been instructed. 4 minutes 24 seconds later, he rushed toward the door to Daphne dressed in a hastily belted dressing gown. Hermione was standing in front of the door.

"Stop." She planted her hand in the middle of his chest. "Harry listen to me. This is her first time. Ron hurt me badly the first time; and only the potion that kept me going. You two are under something similar. Don't you hurt her. You

were gentle with me, but you weren't in this state with me. Think about what you are doing."

"Thank you Hermione. Thank you for putting up with me."

"Go."

She watched as he went through the door, and then went to her own bed. She needed to cry a little bit.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione lay in the bed, trying unsuccessfully to not think about what was happening in the next room. She and Harry had spent 5 nights together, making love each night except the night before when he found he could not concentrate on anything except Daphne. Hermione had been expecting that to happen, but it still hurt. Her research had led her to expect his reaction the previous night as well as how they were responding to each other now. This expectation was no help with the anger that burned inside of her upon hearing the happy sounds coming from Daphne's bed. Harry had evidently listened to her.

Wonderful.

Her mind drifted back to the conversation Daphne and she had shared while Harry was taking his seats on the Wizengamot:

They had been discussing nonsense things, school, classes, favorite meals in the Great Hall, when Daphne asked the question she had been leading up to:

“Is Harry gentle?”

Hermione had been startled by that question. “He’s never struck me if that’s what you mean.”

“No, I mean is he a gentle lover?” The Slytherin blushed. “I’ve never done anything beyond kissing, I mean I think I know what goes where, but...”

“Harry is a most gentle lover. He will worry far more about you and how you are feeling than what he wants.”

“His magic, it’s just so... so... powerful. It’s always with me, surrounding me, protecting me, it’s got me so... aroused. It started the day we first agreed to continue. His magic then hadn’t felt any different than it did when we were in school, very powerful, but nothing in the extreme. But it started to build, until it was all I could think about. When I sleep, I dream of him. I wake up touching myself.” Her blush deepened. “I barely know him, this is driving me insane. The books say that the urgency will die down in a couple of months, but I don’t know if I can take it that long.”

“I’ve researched it as well, and what I found agrees with what you describe. You don’t have to worry about Harry, he would never hurt you.”

“I’ve had my wedding night planned out since I was old enough to know what it was all about. Is it wrong to want romance when starting a contract?”

“There’s nothing wrong with wanting what you want Daphne.”

“What about you? The culture you come from doesn’t recognize polygamy, what is this doing to you?”

“I won’t lie to you. I hate this. When he goes to you, I think I’m going to cry, but Harry and I came together knowing that you would be part of us. We will have to learn to deal with it, together.”

“Will you be there with us? Will you be wanting me there when he’s with you?”

“NO!”

The raven-haired girl closed her eyes and sighed. “Thank Morgana, I think I was more worried about that than...”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Harry found Daphne lying on the bed in a white silk robe. She wet her lips when she saw him. His control slipping away, Harry lay next to her, his hands exploring her body, gently opening the robe to expose her flesh. Her hands opened his robe and her gentle fingers traced the scars on his body.

“You must think I’m some kind of slut.”

Harry lifted his mouth from the ear lobe he was nibbling. “Don’t be silly. Do you honestly think I can’t feel the compulsion as well?” He settled back down kissing her neck. “We each agreed to the contract for our own reasons.” He reached around her, cupping her butt in his hand and rolled her on top of himself, maximizing skin-to-skin contact. “Now

our magic is pushing us together trying to make more magic. You are driving me crazy.”

Daphne ground her pelvis against him, and took his erection in her hand. “Are you going to take me?”

He kissed her. “No, I would never take anything from you. We are going to make love.”

Daphne could feel his heart pounding against her chest, as she continued to grind against him seeking release. “I can’t wait anymore. Love me... I’ve never done this. Please don’t hurt me.”

Harry positioned her so that she was kneeling above him, and placed himself at her opening. “You’re controlling this, go as fast or as slow as you want, if it hurts, just back off... I’ll just be here, trying not to move until you want me to.”

Daphne began to move on him, sinking down until she felt him against her hymen, then easing back, his hands exploring her body as she moved above him. Finally, she allowed herself to push back far enough that the membrane tore. She collapsed upon him panting. The pain took her breath away. She lay atop of him, impaled on him until she got her breath back and began to move again. Slowly at first, then faster as the passion grew. She found herself wondering if this was true physical passion or the effects of their shared magic. When his hands found her breasts she discovered that she didn’t care.

...---ooo000ooo---...

The Daily Prophet:

BOY WHO LIVED: Dumbledore a Thief

Says Leader of the Light and Hogwarts Headmaster Uses Women in attempt to control him

Ministry of Magic

Meric Altern reporting:

In an unprecedented confrontation before the annual seating of the Wizengamot Albus Dumbledore, Hogwarts Headmaster confronted Harry Potter also known as the Boy Who Lived, and attempted to prevent him from taking his seats on the Legislative Branch of Wizarding Britain.

This public disagreement between two of the Leaders of Light magic shocked this reporter and had similar effects on other passerby's. Potter accused his Headmaster of being a Thief, asking if the Headmaster had "accounted for the monies you have withdrawn from my vaults yet?" Dumbledore responded that Potter needed to be reminded of his place, and went on to forbid the Chosen One from taking his seats on the Wizengamot and threatened to return him to his Muggle Relative's home despite the fact that Potter had reached his majority on July 31st

Lord Potter was seen leaving the Ministry building later that day in the company of long time gal pal Hermione Granger (17) and classmate Daphne Greengrass (17). Owls requesting interviews returned unopened.

The Quibbler:

Harry Potter Assumes Family Seats on Wizengamot

By Luna Lovegood staff reporter

Ministry Of Magic – London.

Harry Potter, also known as The Boy Who Lived, The Chosen One, and #2 in his year for Hogwarts All House tasty bum competition, formally assumed his seats on the Wizengamot, becoming the first Lord Potter in 24 years and the first Lord Black in 14. Potter (17) was confronted by Albus Dumbledore prior to his seating when the elder Wizard forbid The Chosen One from assuming his rightful seats.

In what seems to be an odd confrontation between headmaster and adult student on summer holiday, the headmaster directed Harry to: “You will remain in my office and I will return you to your Aunt’s home after this meeting.” Potter responded that the Headmaster “may have missed it Headmaster, but I have reached my majority. What ever say you may have had in my life is over. I am an adult, and I chose to ignore your commands.” This exchange left the Elder Wizard extremely angry; many other words were exchanged ending with Potter saying: “I am heir to two different noble houses. The hereditary seats became available to me when I became 17. My status in school is not addressed by law or custom.” Potter continued: “Your interference in my life is over Headmaster. I am not your servant; I am not bound to you. Keep your whores away from me Pimp.”

It is unclear what Potter meant by the comment about the Headmaster’s Whores, but it is quite clear that there is trouble in store for the light side of magic.

Having assumed his ancestral seats of government, rumors are rife that Harry Potter may take not one, but two wives

one for both lines. Potter, a permanent fixture in the Witch Weekly Top Five Eligible Bachelor Wizards Lists, may have already made his choices. If so this reporter offers her congratulations to the lucky witches. If the rumors are untrue, this reporter reminds Lord Black-Potter that she will meet him at school...

...---ooo000ooo---...

Molly Weasley knew exactly who Harry was referring to when he mentioned the Headmaster's whores. How dare that insignificant nothing speak that way of her son and daughter? When they were reintroduced to the thrall, they would both be punished for this insult.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Ginny Weasley also read the Prophet, Hermione was still with Harry. That surprised her. She had expected Harry to get Hermione away from the Wizarding world with her parents, then return. To her, she hoped, to Hogwarts at very least. Once there he WOULD be hers.

However, Hermione was still in the picture. Had Ron taught her too well? Was she giving Harry what Molly would not allow Ginny to offer?

It would be too bad if Hermione had an accident...

...---ooo000ooo---...

“Good Morning Hermione.”

She would not look at him.

“Was she better than me?”

“Hermione!”

The bushy haired witch looked up, her eyes glittering with tears waiting to fall. “You kept at it until 4am. 6 hours Harry. Was she better than me?”

Harry tried to take her into his arms, but she would have none of it.

“Don’t touch me. I have researched the magic behind the marriage contracts. It gives the couple and all consuming need to consummate the union. Once. On rare occasions twice. I heard you, felt you, reach orgasm 4 times Harry. So I ask you again Harry, is she better than I am? What is she doing that I don’t ?”

“You aren’t thinking clearly Hermione.” Daphne sat down on the sofa next to her cowife. “Yes usually the marriage is consummated once. You know as well as I do that Harry is far from usual. We were both under the compulsion of his magic last night, from the second you sent him to me until we both passed out from exhaustion.” She looked to Harry. “I don’t understand why, but you are enormously more powerful than you were last year.” Again fixing Hermione in her gaze. “I still feel the compulsion, it’s building again. That isn’t supposed to happen. For the next three or four months we are supposed to crave each other’s touch, but is isn’t supposed to be... this.”

“When Harry was tested in Salem, the apparatus indicated that his magic was blocked.” Hermione was embarrassed by

her reaction to the others. I haven't had a chance to research exactly what that meant, but I have noticed that his increase in power coincided with your initial bonding."

"Blocked? That's not possible. Harry was entirely too powerful to have been blocked. When someone's magic is blocked, they only have access to 10 percent of their magic, if Harry were blocked that would mean..."

"Sweet Merlin. That would explain why he's been affecting you so much."

"We need to perform a bonding ritual."

"What's a bonding ritual?"

"It will link the three of us Harry. It's our only way out of the jealousy I'm feeling."

"We're feeling Hermione. Just the thought of you with him tonight is making me angry. We need to bond."

"Ok, you two geniuses are going to have to slow down and explain things to me. Use small words. My magic was blocked? By who? Voldemort?"

"Unlikely." Said Daphne. "He was looking to kill you, not cripple you."

"Not your parents either, Sirius and Remus always told stories about how proud your parents were of your bursts of powerful accidental magic." Hermione furrowed her brow. "That only leaves Dumbledore."

“Putting a restrictor on his weapon until he ‘gave me the power’ to defeat Voldemort. Wonderful. That makes sense in his control freak world I guess. Ok, what will this bonding ritual do?”

It will link us body and soul. Each of us will know what the others think, how they feel, and we would share our magic.”

“So each of you would be able to use my magic as well as your own?”

“Yes, and you would be able to draw on ours if you needed it.”

Harry nodded. “What do we need for this ritual?”

···---ooo000ooo---...

The three of them sat on the floor in a circle, three goblets sat on the floor before them. Hermione dipped a finger in the goblet and traced the rune for magic on Harry’s forehead. Harry did the same, tracing the rune for the soul on Daphne’s. Daphne repeated the action tracing the rune for the mind on Hermione’s forehead. The runes each glowed a vibrant blue. The trio each picked up a goblet, and incanted in unison: “Communico anima” and sipped at the potion.

Each passed their goblet to their left and incanted: “Communico acies” and sipped at the potion, before again passing the goblet to their left.

Finally they incanted “Communico magicus” and drained the goblets. The Blue aura of the runes expanded to their whole bodies, then projected into the middle of their circle, fusing in

to a single mass of light, then returned to their bodies, then to the runes, which slowly faded.

Drained they each slumped to the floor. With the last of his strength Harry pulled the women to him and held them, one on each side as they all lost consciousness.

··---ooo000ooo---...

“Harry?”

He opened his eyes to find Daphne looking very concerned. She was very pretty when she was concerned.

“Thank you Harry,” her voice was in his head. “You aren’t too hard to look at either.”

“Either I’ve gone crazy, or it worked.”

“Of course it worked” Hermione huffed in his head. “Since when do Daphne and I make mistakes? Though that doesn’t discount your being crazy in the slightest.” The tiniest bit of humor crept into their connection. “By the way, you are a disgusting pervert. Daphne and I have been treated to your fractured psyche producing pornographic fantasies about us while simultaneously arguing about the reality of the situations, ignoring yourself, condemning your self to hell for it?”

“Could be worse you know... What if it was about Draco?”

“Oh Bloody Hell Harry!” the two witches spoke aloud, and oddly in unison. It gave them both pause.

“That was odd.” Hermione said.

“Are we synchronizing? Or is the bond closer because we’re both women?”

“Maybe it’s because we were both disgusted by the thought of a naked Draco?”

Daphne shuddered. “Please, don’t say that. I’ve seen a naked Draco. That little sleaze came on to me first year. He informed me that he had ‘chosen’ me for the honor of giving him his first blow job.” She smiled a little at the memory. “I kicked him hard. He sent Crabbe and Goyle after me; they roughed me up pretty good, until Tracy hexed them both. The pair of them are still frightened of her.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Neville was sitting in the usual carriage, the last compartment in the last carriage. True to his word, Harry was not on the train, neither was Hermione, and he assumed Daphne ... Black. That was going to take some getting used to. He was going to make sure to be on the side of the Gryffindor table facing the Head table. It should be an entertaining show.

Neville still could not believe that Hannah Abbott was actually willing to spend time with him. In his minds eye he still saw himself as the pudgy boy who somehow accidentally got sorted into Gryffindor. He did not see the confident young man he had become. Fortunately, Hannah DID see him as he now was, and had high hopes for what he might become. Consequently instead of the last compartment in the last carriage holding the Golden Trio,

assorted other Gryffindors and Luna Lovegood, it was a mix of Griffs, Puffs, and Luna Lovegood.

“Neville, where’s Harry?” asked Hannah as the Express pulled out of platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$. “I got an Owl post saying that he and Hermione were missing and in danger at the beginning of August. Then the Prophet said he was in some kind of confrontation with Dumbledore at the Seating Ceremony. Has he contacted you?”

“Sorry Hannah, not my place to say, but Harry’s ok, so is Hermione. I would suggest that everyone get a good seat at the feast. One with a good view of the Head table.”

“Come on Nev, spill” interjected Ernie. “Justin and I saw Harry and Hermione at a Muggle Dance club; they were with Daphne Greengrass of all people. The three of them were VERY friendly. What’s more magic was just POURING off Harry, even more intensely than when he got pissed at Umbitch fifth year in the Room of Requirements and shattered every piece of glass in the castle. He wasn’t angry at that club, far from it.”

“Harry was happy? Good.” Commented Luna from behind her issue of the Quibbler

“Well, I don’t know about ‘happy’.” Justin said. “It was more like he was progressively becoming more and more... I don’t know... Horny. Daphne was just hanging off him, to a lesser degree, so was Hermione. I don’t think...”

They never found out what Justin thought, the door to the compartment slid open with a thunk. Draco Malfoy and his bookends entered.

“So, where’s Scarhead and the mudblood Longbottom?”

“They said something about stomping a ferret Bad Faith, oh Hi Harry.”

Malfoy spun to look where Neville indicated and saw... nothing.

Everyone in the compartment laughed.

“Who do you think you’re playing with Blood traitor?”

“Bad Faith, my family was a noble house when yours was still selling their wives, sisters, and mother’s virtues for drink. How is your mother anyway? Your father still using her to ensure his cellars are topped off?”

Furious Malfoy whipped out his wand, and found himself facing six.

“Draco, you are a pathetic dueler who loses even when you cheat.” Susan Bones spoke up. “We on the other hand have been trained by Harry Potter, the man who has consistently defeated your dark lord. Now we aren’t in Harry’s league, but we are certainly above yours. Are you sure you want to do this?”

Malfoy slowly backed out of the carriage.

“Well said Susan.”

“Thank you Ernie. I just hope Harry shows up and stomps on him.”

···---ooo000ooo---...

The Sorting was finished, the new students distributed to their new houses. Minerva McGonagall has signaled for silence so that the Headmaster could say his traditional 'few words'

Dumbledore stood from his new chair. Where is Potter? I thought sure that Granger would bring him back, since I know they're in the country...

He drew in breath for his witty offering when the huge double doors to the Great Hall suddenly slammed open. Harry Potter strode in, flanked on either side by Hermione Granger and Daphne Greengrass, all three were clad in robes of Black Acromantula silk. Potter's robes bore the crests of the Potter and Black families. Dumbledore paled when he saw the crests on the robes of the two women. He wouldn't have. He wouldn't dare.

"Sorry we're late Head Master." Potter said in a conversational tone that carried throughout the Great Hall. "My wives and I were unavoidably delayed."

···---ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Ten – Conflict of Interest

“Sorry we’re late Head Master.” Potter said in a conversational tone that carried throughout the Great Hall. “My wives and I were unavoidably delayed.”

“Wives Mr. Potter?” the old man could not believe this was happening. Twenty years of planning, gone. The Great Hall exploded in a flurry of conversations that died away as soon as Harry continued to speak.

“Why yes Headmaster. You of course know Hermione Granger, The Lady Potter, and Daphne Black nee Greengrass, the Lady Black.”

This could not stand, separated he could break their wills individually. “You understand of course Mr. Potter that there are no quarters for married students here at Hogwarts.”

“Ah Headmaster, another of you little jokes, anyone who has read Hogwarts: A History knows that there are indeed married student quarters, that have simply fallen out of common use given the increasing rarity of marriage before leaving school. In fact, Headmaster I am positive that you were aware of our status, having consulted a seer on the topic because more than a month before Hermione and I married, you withdrew 7000 galleons from my vault designating it as ‘tuition’. Since the normal tuition is only 1400 galleons, the additional must have been the tuition for my wives and the extra for the married quarters... Otherwise, what possible reason would you have for such a massive withdrawal from my vault?”

Minerva McGonagall fixed the Headmaster with a look of surprise. Dumbledore ignored her and tried another tack.

“You and your ladies never registered Mr. Potter.”

“Still with the jokes Headmaster? What Possible reason would you have to process tuition for students who are not registered for class?”

Harry felt a presence in his mind, and pushed it away, it returned with a sledgehammer blow. Harry’s magic instinctively took hold of the legimens probe and twisted it. Snape gasped and slumped in his chair obviously in agony, but incapable of making any sound.

Harry? Hermione spoke in his head

Who attacked you? Daphne asked.

The two women surged to his side, their concern radiating. Dumbledore was taken aback by the amount of emotion the two women had for Potter.

“You would do well to curb you pet Death Eater before I have to neuter him Headmaster. I don’t think either of us would want that.”

“What have you done to Professor Snape?” Dumbledore demanded.

“He entered my mind uninvited, so I pushed him out, he then smashed his way back in, so I figured, if he wanted in that badly, I’d hold on and keep him... Who knew rudeness could turn out to be so painful?”

“Release him at once!”

“Certainly Headmaster.” Concentrating Harry released his attacker. “That was your free shot Professor, next time I’ll really hurt you.” Harry returned his attention to the Headmaster.

“You attacked a Professor Harry?”

“ You’re on a roll tonight Headmaster, the Professor attacked me, in front of all these witnesses” Harry gestured toward the staff table and the students. “Why do you suppose he felt he could get away with attempting mind rape like that?” Harry’s eye contact with the ancient wizard never faltered, almost daring him to attempt his mind magic. “Well Headmaster, it’s been a long day, my Ladies and I are awfully hungry... Would you mind terribly if we joined the Hufflepuffs for dinner? We all feel the need for a little loyalty, having had enough ‘bravery’ without honor and ‘ambition’ without thought...” without waiting for permission Harry put an arm around each of his wives and turned toward the ‘puff’s table, before stopping. “Oh Headmaster? I would really appreciate it if you were to monitor the kitchens for potion contamination. I had a little trouble last year, but I’m over it now, and I’m not feeling nearly as blocked as I used to be...”

Dumbledore’s eyes widened when he realized what he had just been told.

····ooo000ooo---

“Mind if we join you?” Hermione asked Susan Bones.

“By all means!” the 7th year ‘puffs made room for the married trio.

“What the hell did you do to Snape?”

“Taught him not to mess with me anymore Justin. Anyone think there much of a chance he’s learned his lesson?”

The food appeared on the tables and everyone filled their plates. The conversation divided its self along gender lines.

“So,” Hannah Abbott asked the question everyone wanted to know, “When did this happen? None of you were together at the end of last year...”

“Remember Harry and I were starting to date at the beginning of last year?” There was a general agreement of the young women speaking with her. “The Weasleys dosed us with a Love-control potion”

“Love potions!” the women hissed, starting to send death glares toward the Gryffindor table.

“And you Daphne?”

“Harry and I are contractually married Susan. Well, not Harry and I specifically. Lord Black and the house of Greengrass.”

Contract marriages were far from rare, though in recent memory the contracts had not been executed until leaving school.

“With his upbringing, I never would have thought that Harry would take part in a contract marriage.” Megan Jones cast an appraising look at the raven-haired man deep in conversation with Justin and Ernie.

“In as much as Harry married Hermione first, all three of us had our concerns, but we’ve worked through them for the most part. I for one am extremely happy with my new husband and the sister I always wanted.”

“But Hermione wouldn’t have had a say in the matter would she?”

“I’m sorry Megan, this is Hermione Granger. Have you met?”

The girls started giggling.

····ooo000ooo---...

“Oh, that can’t be good for you Mate.”

“In my vast married experience, laughing wives are happy wives. Happy wives mean life isn’t all that bad.”

Justin smiled “Just how ‘vast’ is this experience?”

“Ah, ten days”

The ‘puffs laughed.

“That’s ten days more than any of you clowns have.”

“Gotta give you that Harry. Ernie and I spotted the three of you at a club Monday night... If we had any idea that you had married them, we would have abused you then.”

“No we wouldn’t have Justin. The girls we were with were a lot more fun than abusing Harry could ever be.”

“True enough.” Justin got an evil grin on his face. “So, two wives eh? Together or individually?”

Harry turned to his wives “Ladies, Justin has some questions about our sex lives...”

“Oh really?” asked Hermione coldly.

“Are you sure you want to know Justin?” Daphne purred dangerously.

“Harry!”

“You dug your own grave Mate, all I did was point you out to the undertakers.”

The table erupted into laughter.

...---ooo000ooo---...

At the Gryffindor table confusion reined, the topic of conversation was of course why Harry and Hermione had abandoned them. Knowing the answer, Neville was keeping his own counsel. The Weasleys also knew the reason, but were dealing with it in two different ways.

Ginny was utterly shocked. Harry was married. Twice. Granger looked pleased with herself. Greengrass was just hanging off Harry. This was not going to stand. She was supposed to marry Harry, not those two sluts. Dumbledore would fix this. He had to. He made promises.

Ron on the other hand was in a dark burning fury. It was not bad enough Harry had taken Hermione from him; the greedy attention-seeking bastard had another woman as well. Images of Hermione on her knees in front of Harry, using the mouth he had trained to make that miserable halfblood happy. Dumbledore would fix this, or someone was going to die.

···---ooo000ooo---...

The conversations at the Slytherin table dealt with the same topic. Only instead of focusing on Potter and Granger, the snakes focused on Daphne Greengrass.

It was relatively common knowledge among the Slytherins that the contract between the House of Greengrass and the House of Black existed. There had been multiple attempts at executing that contract over the last century. Draco Malfoy had expected to receive the head of the House of Greengrass after he had become Lord Black. He was the closest to the title by blood. When he had approached the Goblins the day he turned 17 he had expected to be shown to his new vaults. He had been ejected from the bank by two security goblins when he had reacted badly to being told that he was not and would never be Lord Black.

Now Potter is Lord Black. Now Potter has Greengrass. If anything happened to Potter, she would inherit the head of

house status unless his will specifically sent it elsewhere. Fucking Scar Head.

Tracy Davis was also watching Daphne. Daphne had actually done it. Some how Daphne had managed to bend Potter to her will; he had not used any of the various outs that the contract provided him. At least that was her first thoughts, the more she watched the more she wondered just who was bent to whose will. Daphne was clinging to him and hanging on his every word. What magic was in that contract? On the other hand, had her best friend actually fallen in love?

····-ooo000ooo---...

At the Ravenclaw table, the 'claws were demonstrating just how above the rest of the school there were by pointedly not discussing the married trio. Luna was making absurd observations about truly meaningless things to those sitting around her, and to no one. Harry and Hermione had married. Wonderful, entire realities had fallen away from the decision tree; there had been high odds against Daphne joining them. In the vast majority of realities where the contract existed, one or the other of them had rejected the possibility out of hand, of the few that had them together the majority of those realities promised happiness for them, and usually Hermione as well.

This cusp was pleasing to Luna as well, of the remaining possible realities, she now had a ninety percent chance of survival, and a better than even chance for love. She stole a glance at the head table. Dumbledore and Snape were furious at Harry and his wives, for very different reasons. The remainder of the staff found its self divided between those like Hagrid and Pomfrey who had no idea what was

going on, and McGonagall and Flitwick who were shocked at the exposure of Dumbledore's dealings with Harry's money.

...---ooo000ooo---...

The meal done; everyone had eaten his or her fill. Dumbledore had made his usual beginning of year pronouncements about the forbidden forest being forbidden and Filches' ever-expanding list of forbidden objects. The students were excused to their dormitories.

The 'puffs stood to leave with Hermione and Daphne starting to join them.

"Just a second."

The pair settled "What is it Harry?"

"Either Dumbledore or McGonagall will be here in a second to tell us he wants to see me in his office. He does this quite a bit Daphne."

"Very perceptive Mr. Potter."

" Good evening Professor." Harry turned to the Transfiguration instructor. "Did you have a good summer?"

"Apparently not as interesting a holiday as you had Mr. Potter, the Headmaster would indeed like to see you in his office."

" Well then, we shouldn't keep him waiting." He stood offering his hands to his wives. "Ladies?"

“The Headmaster specifically said for you to go alone Mr. Potter. I am to escort Miss Granger and Miss Greengrass to your quarters.”

“Black.”

“Excuse me Miss Greengrass?”

“I am Mrs. Black, or Lady Black. I am no longer Daphne Greengrass.”

“And I believe we will accompany our husband to see the Headmaster Professor. We wouldn’t want anything to suddenly separate us like what happened to Harry and myself last Year.”

“I see. I believe I would like to schedule some time to speak with the three of you before classes start. Will you be available tomorrow at say 10 am?”

“I believe that is doable on our part Professor. Of course that would depend on what the Headmaster has to say.”

“Of course. The Password to the Headmaster’s office is ‘Dove Bar’”

···---ooo000ooo---...

“Ready?”

“ Let’s do this.” Daphne said, Hermione nodded in agreement.

The gargoyle slide out of the way at the password, the stairs took them to the closed door. Harry knocked.

“Come in.”

The trio entered.

“I believe I only asked for you Harry.”

“Ah, possibly a miscommunication Headmaster, but we’re all here now. How can I help you?”

“I would like you to explain why you chose to marry this summer.”

“No.”

“Excuse me?”

“My relationship with my wives has nothing to do with education. Since our relationship is that of Headmaster and student, my personal life is none of your business.” Harry looked about the office. “I see you redecorated since I was here last... Was there anything in this office you did own?”

“Mr. Potter I’m afraid I’m going to have to require you to explain yourself, in full, or you will find yourself expelled.”

“Really Headmaster? I would be interested in seeing the school regulation that allows you to make that threat. Of course, since I have a standing offer from the Salem Academy for a full scholarship for my ladies and myself it wouldn’t bother me all that much. In fact, it might free up the time to investigate the odd transactions from my vaults for

the last 16 years or so... The Goblins are fairly insistent that I look into it so that if there was any malfeasance it could be punished..." the empty perch caught his eye. "Where's your phoenix Headmaster?"

Dumbledore ignored the jibe. Granger, she always respected authority. Potter would not talk, fine, the mudblood would.

"Miss Granger, perhaps you could explain?"

"No."

"Miss Granger, I insist."

"Insist all you like Headmaster, after what you did to my sister-wife I tried to talk them into vendetta."

"Miss Greengrass, I must ask you..."

"There is no 'Miss Greengrass' here Headmaster. I am Mrs. Black, unless you want to be formal, then I am Lady Black." Her magic flared into a visible aura. "There will be no repeat of your machinations from last year. We test each other's food and drink. Anyone attempting to give any of us a potion is likely to die."

"The same goes for Obliviators Headmaster." Hermione joined the conversation. "Further if you value the two youngest Weasleys or Nymphadora Tonks you will keep your whores away from us."

"And of course there are the copies of memories stored at various places around the world; detailing what was done to us and scheduled for publication should we fail to report in

very specific ways tied to those memories. That might be sad for some people.”

“Harry’s right. There aren’t a lot of lemon drops in Azkaban.”

“Mr. Potter, your feelings aside, the old families of the light are not going to tolerate you mixing the Potter with ...”

“A ‘Mudblood’ Headmaster?” asked Hermione helpfully.

“If you are correct, then they aren’t terribly light are they? I will destroy them just as I will destroy Tom. Problem solved.” He stood.

“If there is nothing else Headmaster. Ladies?” Harry offered them his arms. At the door, Harry turned back, “Oh Headmaster, I was serious about Snape having had his one free shot. The next time he attempts to enter my mind uninvited, I will destroy his mind, and a generation of potions students will cheer. He will not be able to resist, so you should start lining up another Potions Master. The gloves, or rather, the bindings are off.”

Dumbledore sat watching the door long after it had closed. The instrumentation in his office showed that Harry was not bluffing. The boy had access to all the magic in his core, and his core was still growing.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Safely in their married quarters (the second quarters offered, the first had only two bedchambers, Harry insisted on three.) the girls sat in the common room while Harry checked the

various portraits for surveillance charms. There was a knocking at the entrance.

Hermione opened the door to find the Patils, Lavender Brown, and Tracey Davis.

“Let us in. We need to talk.” Lavender had an uncharacteristic focused look.

The five young women entered and found seats in the common area, Daphne pulling Tracey into her bedchamber. Harry finished his security sweep of the rooms and spotted the women starting to talk, he decided that he wanted no part of this, and retreated to his room.

“The ‘puffs are saying that the Weasley’s dosed you and Harry with love potions last year.” Pavarti was furious that anyone would do such a thing.

“Yes, they did. The Headmaster supplied them with the Mancipiumdiligo potion.”

Padma gasped. “That requires the victim to be sexually active in order for the potion to maintain its hold.” Her eyes widened. “Ron didn’t? Not to you?”

“Yes he did. In every way. I remember every second of it; I remember how he made me beg him to do it to me.” Hermione looked a little ashamed. “I liked it. I know that the potion made me like it, but I still feel the shame. I can’t believe Harry is willing to touch me...” Parvarti pulled her into an embrace.

“My god. I went to the ball with him...” Padma shuttered a bit. “And Ginny did that to Harry?”

“No, Molly wouldn’t stand for her princess risking her virginity. Dumbledore had Nymphadora Tonks go to Harry at night wearing Ginny’s face. Harry honestly thought she was a wet dream. When I realized what they were doing to me, I ran. When I got home, they had my parents under the Imperius curse. Then I ran for Harry, and got him away from his minders.” She noted that all of her friends were paying rapt attention. “We went to ground as muggles, getting my parents and we went to the United States. There Harry found out about the Black family contract with the Greengrass family. Harry did not want to make his marriage a contract affair, he wanted to marry for love, and he asked me and we married ten days ago. Daphne and he executed the contract last Monday, and we did a bonding ritual with the three of us Tuesday. Now we’re here, that’s the story.”

“But you’re happy?”

“Yes, I am and we are Pavarti. At first I was horribly jealous, but once we bonded...”

“Bonding rituals are permanent Hermione; the three of you will be bound together for life.”

“We know that Lavender, it’s what we wanted anyway, why not take it to the ultimate expression?”

...---ooo000ooo---...

“So, you got what you wanted?”

“Yes, everything I wanted and more Tracy. You wouldn’t believe his magic, or how it makes me feel.”

“You’re ok with sharing with Granger?” The shorter girl was concerned for her friend.

“Hermione and I are fine with each other Tracy. At first we were both incredible jealous of each other, all the plans otherwise aside. We ended up needing a bonding ritual. That was amazing, it’s like we all fused at some level.”

“Wait, you were jealous?”

Daphne blushed. “Yes. It didn’t make any sense to me either, but when I saw him with her, I just wanted to... well lets just say we’re getting along fine now.”

“But you still separate to speak to your friends?”

“I pulled you in here more for you, and so we could discuss the plan, most of those girls would be horrified at the idea of the plan. That being said, I share Hermione’s feelings for her friends, she shares mine for you.”

Tracy nodded. “Alright then, now the important question. How was Potter? Is he father material?”

“Tracy, you have no idea. We spoke about the compulsion embedded in the marriage contract. As soon as we finished the initial agreements, his magic started affecting me. It was always there, surrounding me, calming me, arousing me. I started dreaming about him. His magic started out powerful and grew every single minute. It’s still there, even now. Hermione found out his magic had been bound.”

“Bound? But that’s not possible; he easily had one of the top three power levels at school since 4th year.”

“He was bound, believe me. Evidently, when we started the contract, it was not just his magic affecting me, but mine affected him. My magic disrupted his bindings, unleashing his full potential. That potential almost consumed me.”

“How so?”

“After we signed the final contracts, Harry, Hermione, and I went out to eat dinner in a Muggle restaurant. Then we went dancing. My last memory was the first time we danced like Muggles, he was holding me and I just melted into him, then I can’t remember anything until we were all back in our suite and Hermione was telling me to think about what I wanted, what I wanted to remember about the night.”

“Are you sure you weren’t dosed with a potion.”

“If you knew what Harry thinks about love potions you wouldn’t ask.” She blushed a bit. “It was wonderful, we were both under the compulsion, but he was gentle. We made love for over 6 hours.”

“6 hours? Sweet Morgana.” Tracy Davis was NOT a virgin, she felt a bit of envy for her friend. “Are you still following the plan, or have you fallen in love?”

“The two are not mutually exclusive Tracy.”

“I guess I can see that. Do you have any regrets Daphne?”

“Only that it’s Hermione’s turn with him tonight.”

····ooo000ooo····

October 31, 1942

Tom Riddle was in the arms of the woman he loved more than his own life. Deputy Headmaster Dumbledore had introduced him to Candice Sweets the year before, and they had been meeting ever few days ever sense. Dumbledore had even facilitated his leaving Hogwarts following the Halloween feast, something not normally allowed.

Candice (Tom steadfastly refused to call her ‘Candi’) was everything he had ever wanted in a companion. She challenged his intellect, and loved him for himself, not for what he could do. She did not care that he grew up alone and abused in a Muggle orphanage. She did not care that he was winning awards, she only cared that he was Tom, he was hers, and their lovemaking was so much the better for it. The fact that she was 6 years his senior did not matter to him at all. All his life he had wanted love, in Candice he had finally found it. He owed Dumbledore for this. He swore to himself that he would repay the man for finding the answer to his dream.

Their bodies sated, she slept, still holding him inside her. Tom drifted right on the edge of consciousness. Part of his mind dreaming of Candice’s strawberry kisses, part dwelling on his earlier conversation with Dumbledore.

“Grendelwald is still a threat Tom. His adventures in Europe have only wetted his appetite. He has killed millions. It won’t be long before he comes for us here.”

“The Muggles are fighting his sponsors Professor. Last summer I saw some of their newsreels on the war, surely the horrific bombing going on will prevent him from being all that much of a threat.”

“Would those Muggle weapons be any good against you Tom?”

Riddle admitted to himself that he could probably develop a defense against the Muggle weapons if he put his mind to it.

“No, Tom, only a wizard could stand against him. Only you. My time is past; you must defeat him to save the British Wizarding Culture.”

“There are others Professor, I’ve got more power than normal, but I’m not all that unusual. Moody is as powerful as I am.”

“Alistair has his moments, but you have the potential to be so much more Tom, so much more than you could possibly know.”

····ooo000ooo····

Chapter Eleven – Legends of the Fall

The girls had left for the evening; Tracy was still in Daphne's room and might be all night. Hermione was preparing for bed. She brushed her teeth, and then brushed out her hair. She pulled on a black silk wrap, and exited her room to go to Harry. There was something exciting, something forbidden, about doing what she was going to do tonight here at Hogwarts.

She quietly entered and eased the door closed behind her. She could hear his deep rhythmic breathing and knew he was asleep. She undid her wrap and let it fall to the floor as her eyes adjusted to the dim moon light. He lay on his back, his left arm over his eyes, quiet snores coming from his open mouth.

Naked, she slid into the bed beside him, then pushed the blankets and sheet to the foot of the bed and woke him with a kiss.

“Hermione? I thought you'd be with the girls for a while.”

“They've gone back to their dorms Harry. As much as I love them, I wouldn't give up a night with my husband for them.” She kissed him again, and then trailed down his chest. She freed him from his boxers, and took him in her mouth.

“Hermione! Not like that!” He pulled her up so that they were face to face. “That's what Ron did to you.”

“Ron did everything to me Harry. If we didn't do what Ron did to me, we wouldn't even be holding hands. I've come to grips with what he's done to me. This isn't about Ron and

me; this is about you and me. I know that men like oral sex. I know that Ron liked it. I've listened to other girls talk about what their boyfriends like. More importantly, I've heard and seen the sick little fantasies you have in your head. You told me that Tonks never did this. Let me try this Harry. If you don't like it, we can quit. It's important to me that I'm your first at something." She smiled shyly. "Besides, I hear that one of the best ways to say 'thank you' is to return the favor..."

····ooo000ooo····

Harry entered the Great Hall alone. Both Hermione and Daphne had decided that it was far too early to be up on a Saturday morning, so he had gone for a run around the lake. Following the run with a shower he found himself ravenous, which led him to the Great Hall for his favorite Hogwarts meal.

7 am was far too early for Ron to be about so he took a seat at the Gryffindor table, and started to tuck into some eggs and bacon. He performed seven different charms to detect potions and poisons, only after all seven came up clear he began to eat.

"Good Morning Harry."

Harry didn't even look up from his plate. "Good Morning Ginny. Go away Ginny."

She slid onto the bench beside him and moved in close. "Is that anyway to treat an old friend?"

“Just looking out for your survival ‘old friend’. Both of my wives have been fairly vocal about what they would do to ‘the Potions Princess’ if they found you within 5 meters of me.” Harry pointedly vanished the goblet nearest her, picked up another, and placed it on the side of his plate opposite her before filling it with pumpkin juice. “Hermione plans on killing you as painfully as possible, while Daphne is far more creative, her solution would involve you being unable to nurse any children you manage to accidentally have.”

“Like you’d let them do that.”

For the first time he looked up from his plate to gaze into her eyes. “Let them? Princess, I would sell tickets. Go away.”

“I can sit anywhere I want Harry Potter.”

Harry shrugged. “Your funeral.”

Neville Longbottom sat down across from Harry and began filling his own plate. “Good morning Harry, how was your evening?”

“Just fine Nev, yours?”

“Most entertaining, you and your ladies caused quite a stir last night, especially when word got out about the Weasley’s and their potions.”

“You told people about the potions?” Ginny was horrified.

“Oh, I’m sorry Princess, was the fact that you are a conniving backstabbing bitch and your brother a depraved rapist supposed to be a secret? What can I say but ‘Oops!’?”

“Cheating on your whores already Potter?”

“Good Morning Malfoy. This is your only warning, go away, and take your buttboys with you.”

“Maybe you need to learn your place halfblood.”

Harry didn't turn around; his magic told him that Malfoy had drawn his wand. With a thought, a shaft of force crushed the wand and three of the fingers used to grip it. Two more bolts of force slammed into the groins of Crabbe and Goyle, letting them slump to the ground in pain. Malfoy was shoved into the wall and held there by Harry's magic.

Potter rose from the table, and approached the struggling Malfoy scion. As he approached, the pressure on the Slytherin increased until he could barely breathe.

“Recently everyone seems to be extremely interested in my knowing my place. Speaking of my place Draco, who am I?”

“Harry Potter”

“Very good Draco, but who am I to you?”

“You are Lord Black.” The reply came through gritted teeth.

“And you know Draco, being a huge believer in pure blood traditions, just what I can do to you for that insult to my lovely wives.”

“Release Him now Potter.”

“Not now Professor, you are interfering in a Black family honor hearing, which may become an honor duel.”

“I said release him now Potter.” Snape hissed.

“And I told you to mind your own business Professor. And if you pull that wand, I’ll shove it so far up your ass, your eyes will glow when you say ‘Lumos’.” His attention returned to Draco. “So Draco, what IS the punishment for insulting the wives of the Head of an Ancient and Noble house?”

Panic filled the Slytherin’s eyes. “An Honor duel.”

“Very good Draco, but I don’t want to kill you that would be too kind. What could I do to you that would hurt you so much more? I’ll give you a hint; it involves your favorite threat: “when my father hears.” What do you think it is?”

Snape moved to put his hand on Harry’s shoulder, and found himself pressed into the wall as well, unable to move.

“You wouldn’t.”

“The very next time you annoy me in anyway, I’ll dissolve your parent’s marriage Draco, I’ll demand the return of Narcissa’s dowry, which according to my account managers would bankrupt the Malfoy’s, and leave you a penniless bastard both figuratively and literally. Would dear Lucius expend much energy keeping you when you can no longer inherit? Not even a pureblood anymore because a bastard cannot claim it. How long do you suppose you’d survive like that?” He smiled. “Last warning Draco. I’m not in the mood for your crap this year. Oh and go ahead, tell your daddy all

about how mean I'm being to you. I've got a surprise for him as well."

Harry walked away, releasing the pair against the wall, and returned to his breakfast. Snape drew his wand in a smooth motion.

"You arrogant fool, cocky just like your failure of a father! SeptARGHHH!"

Harry's magic crushed Snape's wand and hand before he could complete the curse.

"Can't take me even when my back is turned? Pathetic Snivelous. Just pathetic." He turned to face the table. "You know Ginny, Draco didn't really even make me angry. Just annoyed me a bit. You had best make sure your brother knows all about this. I'm very angry at him. Imagine what I might do."

...---ooo000ooo---...

The Daily Prophet:

HARRY POTTER MARRIES

Head of two Ancient and Noble Houses, Muggleborn Lady Potter, Pureblood Lady Black.

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry

Lois Lane Reporting:

Harry Potter, also known as the Chosen One, or The Boy who Lived announced at the annual Hogwarts Welcoming feast last night that he had taken not one, but two wives. Long time gal pal Hermione Granger (17) is the new Lady Potter (keeping her maiden name in recognition of an odd Muggle tradition) and classmate Daphne Black (nee Greengrass) (17) has become the new Lady Black. Potter, who recently confronted Hogwarts Headmaster Albus Dumbledore when taking his hereditary seats on the Wizengamot, has yet again made history by being the first head of Two Ancient and Noble houses, one historically aligned with the forces of Light, and the other the forces of the Dark. Potter has been heard to remark that this must make him 'gray'.

Reaction to the Black/Potter nuptials has been mixed. Reports from the Ministry of Magic say that the marriage to the Muggleborn Granger is not recorded in any Ministry records. Of course this is not required, but is unusual. The Contract marriage binding the House of Black with the House of Greengrass IS recorded. Ministry Spokeswitch Delores Umbridge was quoted as saying "I find it unlikely that the marriage to a Muggleborn would stand up to ministry review if any harm were to fall upon young Mr. Potter. The Wizarding world would never stand for a Mud.. Muggleborn becoming the defacto head of an Ancient and Noble House." It is unknown if this is simply the personal opinion of Madam Umbridge or the official policy of the Ministry of Magic. When asked for a comment on Madam Umbridge's comments Lord Black/Potter is quoted as saying "It is extremely unlikely that fat ugly toad would survive sticking her wart covered nose into my business again."

Rumors of the involuntary use of Love Potions on Lord Black/Potter were rampant at Hogwarts following the

Welcoming Feast. When asked about the rumors, Lord Black/Potter said “You’d have to ask the Headmaster about that.”

Headmaster Albus Dumbledore was unavailable for comment.

····ooo000ooo····

Teen Witch Weekly:

#1 Most Eligible Bachelor Eligible No Longer

Sorry Ladies, but Harry Potter, heir to not one but two Ancient and Noble Houses, the fifth richest man in Wizarding Britain is officially off the market, both markets in fact.

Potter, Number one on Wizarding Britain’s most eligible bachelor list for 103 consecutive weeks has in the last two weeks married... Twice. His on again off again relationship with long time gal pal and fellow Gryffindor Hermione Granger is most definitely ‘ON’ following a whirlwind courtship that ended with a private ceremony near the grounds of North America’s Salem Academy followed by a short honeymoon where by all reports the happy couple never left their hotel room.

The couple then returned to Britain where young Lord Black/Potter found his Lady Black, wedding the statuesque beauty Daphne Greengrass of Slytherin house, just 5 days before all three were due to return to Hogwarts for their seventh year.

But wait ladies, don’t mourn the loss of Lord Black/Potter too much, this reporter had discovered a bachelor that has

somehow gone undiscovered, the new Lord Longbottom definitely deserves his place on the list, and look this week he makes his first appearance at number 7. I love my job.

...---ooo000ooo---...

December 24, 1942

Tom ran up the stairs. He had managed to get away from the school almost two hours early. The prospect of actually getting to spend Christmas with Candice excited him more than anything in his life. Was his life finally turning around? Could this actually be the first happy Christmas of his life? Nine whole days with this wonderful woman, then back to Hogwarts to train to face Grendelwald. That German bastard would not know what hit him.

Tom slid to a stop in front of the door to Candice's Hogsmeade flat. He was about to knock when he heard the voices from inside.

"How much longer do I have to do this Albus?"

"We are building a weapon my dear girl. Such things are not done on a timetable. Tom is progressing nicely, you are to be commended for your efforts with him. He loves you dearly."

"He's an annoying little shit, he is. Always going on about learning this or that, or winning some award or other, then he starts whining about how hard his life has been. Mean Muggles, poor Tommy. Pathetic. Stroking his ego wouldn't be so bad if he wasn't pathetic in bed. If this goes on much longer, I am going to need more money Albus. Looking this

good doesn't come cheap, and wasting it on a silly school boy isn't going to find me a rich old Wizard."

"You will be well rewarded, just keep giving him the potion, and take your own. At your suggestion, he would be willing to get you anything you want, but do not get him arrested. When he faces Grendelwald, armed with the phony prophecy I have given him, we can move on to the next level of the plan. Both of our rewards await us there."

Tom could not breathe. It was not real? What he was feeling came from a potion? He backed away from the door and descended the stairs in a daze. He slipped into an alley and slid down the wall putting his head into his hands. A year with Candice meant nothing? Dumbledore had been the one to introduce them. Dumbledore had arranged so that he could leave the school to meet with her. Dumbledore was paying her. Was Candice a... Whore?

Deep in his soul anger burned, he sat in the alley for more than two hours as the anger grew in him, consuming him. Dumbledore was using him.

I am a weapon?

Of course you are. The anger mocked him.

Was he intended to die facing Grendelwald so that Dumbledore could swoop in and save the day?

How better to cement his image with the vast unwashed

Candice was feeding me potions?

You heard them fool.

How dare she do that to me? I thought she loved me.

There is no love. That's what fools tell themselves to excuse their lust.

I... I love her.

No you don't. The anger was right. You want her dead.

And Dumbledore is next.

You're growing up Tom.

Riddle rose, and once again climbed the stairs to Candice's flat. This time he knocked on the door.

The woman opened the door and swept him into her arms before he could say a word. "You're late, you. Were you trying to worry me?"

"Last minute things to take care of at the school." He lied. She was lying to him, returning the favor was only fair wasn't it?

"Dinner will be ready in about half an hour luv."

"The only thing I'm hungry for is you." He picked her up and carried her to the bed.

"Tom!" she giggled. "Dinner will burn!"

"We'll order in. A snack after the feast" He gestured and their clothing fell away.

The sex was rough. Candice was surprised. He was actually getting to her for a change, he was thrusting into her as if to punish, when she was coming down off the crest of an orgasm he leaned down and whispered into her left ear.

“I know.”

He continued to pound into her body. “Know what Luv?”

“I know you’re a whore, and Dumbledore is paying you.”

Her eyes widened as his hands found her throat and began to squeeze, and he continued his assault on her body. Tighter and tighter, she felt her windpipe start to close off, her vision lost color, and the room started to darken.

I can’t do it. I can’t kill her

The anger in his soul disagreed. Yes, you can. Kill her

I can’t do it. Help me.

Turn me loose. I will do it

Tom Riddle closed his eyes for the very last time, his magic pulsed through his hands and he felt her neck snap. For the first time Voldemort opened, his eyes and looked into the dead woman’s face as he spent into her.

He rolled off her body, still in its death spasms and began to laugh.

I’m Free

A/N: Yes, I stole the birth of Voldemort from the birth of Rorschach from The Watchmen. Possibly the best transformation scene in modern literature and my feeble efforts at replication are an insult to the original. If you have not read the Watchmen, I recommend you do so. Remember, I am not locked in here with you; you are locked in here with me.

····ooo000ooo····

The Headmaster's office was almost crowded. Harry sat in front of Dumbledore's desk, a furious, bandaged, Snape and a sullen Malfoy behind the Headmaster to his left. Professor McGonagall sitting to Harry's right.

"Mr. Potter, you know why you're here."

"Actually Headmaster, I don't."

"You attacked me you arrogant insufferable..."

"Severus, please. Mr. Potter, your attack on Mr. Malfoy and Professor Snape cannot go unpunished."

"I'm not sure what you mean by attacks Headmaster." Harry smiled innocently. "I was just trying to follow the pureblood traditions like you always want me to. Draco was joshing around calling my wives funny names. As head of his family, I simply called and impromptu Honor Hearing to determine if he was being his normal humorous self, of if he had indeed leveled an insult that would require an Honor Duel and force me to kill him. Professor Snape felt he needed to intervene into our family discussion, and per

traditions, I prevented him from doing so, though a strict reading of the traditions would call for me to kill him for his presumption. Is this why I'm to be punished? Because I didn't kill him?"

"Professor Snape tells a different story Mr. Potter."

"Much like I explained last year Headmaster, I'm not interested in stories, I prefer factual reports." He reached into the breast pocket of his school robes, and placed a green crystal the size of his thumb on the Headmaster's desk. "This recording crystal will detail the encounter. For obvious reasons I've taken to recording my day to day experiences..."

He tapped the crystal with his wand and the playback began.

"You might note that I didn't hurt Professor Snape until he attempted to curse me. In the back. Just the level of bravery I've come to expect from him."

"Headmaster I protest this..."

"Not now Severus. Mr. Potter the use of these recording devices is against school rules."

"It is? What do the school rules say about Professors cursing students in the back? How about the use of potions to control people and facilitate rape?" Harry smiled again. "You'll have to forgive me for not caring all that much about the rules in this mad house. Will the Professor be punished for intruding into Black Family business, or for attacking me from behind?"

“Mr. Potter...”

“I didn’t think so. Headmaster your double standards are becoming tiresome.”

Dumbledore removed his glasses and pinched the bridge of his nose. This was becoming more and more like Riddle’s final year. Damn that Weasley Girl anyway. If she could have just kept from writing the plan down. He dismissed Snape and Malfoy from the office. After they had left he continued.

“On another topic Harry, I’m told that there are rumors about your charges of potion abuse rampant in the dormitories.”

“Not rumors at all Headmaster. I’ve told everyone who asked.”

“Why are you doing this? Do you want to destroy Hogwarts?”

“Yes I do actually. Not so much the school as you personally, but I can get at you through the school, so it’s all good.”

“And you are willing to drag the Weasley’s through the mud to get to me?”

“The two youngest? You bet. Tonks too. Heard from her recently? I had a little discussion with Madam Bones just yesterday. That’s what made us miss the train. Nice lady. Kind of strict though, really strict when it comes to the off shift behavior of her Aurors.” He leaned forward in a conspiratorial manner and whispered. “It seems that the

Aurors have very strict morals clauses in their contracts. Who knew?"

He leaned back in his chair and continued in a conversational tone. "You know Headmaster, if it had just been me you had done to Headmaster; I don't know if we'd be having any real problems at all, after all you've made a habit of screwing me over my whole life. However, you used Hermione to get to me. I will never forgive you for that. I don't care if it takes a hundred years; I'm going to take you down for what you did."

"Be that as it may Mr. Potter, you will have detention for your actions today."

"No."

"Excuse me?"

"I do not recognize your right to punish me in anyway Headmaster. If Snape had kept his nose out of my Family Business, as the pureblood traditions you are so supportive of require, I would not have restrained him. By the rules you cared enough about to interfere with my personal life, I should have killed him. He then attacked me. I defended myself. If you want to punish me for revealing your use of potions to control people, then I will demand a review by the Governors. I will do no detentions for you Headmaster, and none for Snape. I do not kowtow to my inferiors."

····ooo000ooo---

"Thank you both for coming today. I've excused Mr. Potter from this meeting having sat in with him during an interview

with the Headmaster. He is an angry young man, and much of that anger results from by wrongs he perceives to have been done to you Miss Granger. I thought that the three of us should get together, discuss things, and bring me up to date. Mrs. Black, you are of course welcome to stay if it is alright with Hermione.”

The younger witches shared a look.

“I have nothing to hide from my sister-Wife. We are bonded.”

“Thank you Hermione, I appreciate your confidence. I believe I will stay Professor. There are parts of the story I still don’t know.”

“Alright. Let us start with last year. Hermione you and Harry started to date, then at Halloween, you were suddenly with Mr. Weasley, a week later Harry was dating Miss Weasley. Then in late July you suddenly disappeared from the Burrow, Harry comes up missing from his relative’s home, and the Headmaster sends out messages to almost everyone to be on the look out for Harry Potter, who was missing and in danger.”

“Well Professor, the Headmaster was concerned that the old Pureblood families would have problems with ‘the Chosen One’ sullyng his bloodline with a mudblood...”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Twelve – The Chronicles Of Pain

“All right. Let us start with last year.” Professor McGonagall used a conjured tissue to clean her spectacles. “Hermione you and Harry started to date at the beginning of the year, then at Halloween, you were suddenly with Mr. Weasley, a week later Harry was dating Miss Weasley. In late July you suddenly disappeared from the Burrow, Harry comes up missing from his relative’s home, and the Headmaster sends out messages to almost everyone to be on the look out for Harry Potter, who was missing and in danger.”

“Well Professor, the Headmaster was concerned that the old Pureblood families would have problems with ‘the Chosen One’ sullyng his bloodline with a mudblood...”

“The Headmaster wouldn’t...”

“Professor, “Hermione interrupted her favorite teacher, “He not only would, he did. He provided a love potion to Ron and Ginny Weasley. They used it to break us up.”

McGonagall covered her mouth with her hand. If anyone else were telling this story, she would have dismissed it out of hand. But this was Hermione Granger... Potter?

“What potions were used Miss Granger?”

“The Weasleys used mancipiumdiligo on Harry and me and vincodiligo on themselves Professor.”

McGonagall was horrified. “Mancipiumdiligo would require Mr. Weasley to have” she hesitated, “made use of you.”

“He did, in every way.” Tears started to form in her brown eyes. “He made me beg him.” Daphne pulled Hermione into a hug, whispering comforting words.

What has Albus done? “What are your intentions Mrs. Black?”

Daphne looked up from her embrace with her sister-wife. “I will protect my family Professor. As long as the Weasleys keep their distance, they have nothing to fear from me. If they cross that line, nothing and no one in this school will protect them from me.”

····ooo000ooo---

Sunday morning Harry once again came to breakfast alone. It both amazed and amused him how the two women in his life would be so different, yet do so many of the same things. No force on earth was going to get them out of bed early on the weekend. It would be amusing to see if Daphne was all bright eyed at 7 am tomorrow morning in anticipation of the first day of classes. Hermione certainly would be.

Neville sat across from him again. “Good Morning Harry.”

Harry noted Neville’s clothing had a slight spattering of soil and leaves. “Morning Nev. Busy night in the Greenhouses?”

“Professor Sprout needed some help with replanting a new nocturnal Clingvine. It was a lot of fun.” He hesitated. “Harry I need some advice.”

“What ever you need Nev, how can I help?”

Neville reached into a pocket on the inside of his robes and pulled out a folded magazine. "Have you seen this?"

Harry unfolded the magazine. "Teen Witch Weekly?"

"Just read the section I circled."

"Teen Witch Weekly!" Harry giggled, uh chuckled in an extremely mature married head of house sort of way.

But wait ladies, don't mourn the loss of Lord Black/Potter too much, this reporter had discovered a bachelor that has somehow gone undiscovered, the new Lord Longbottom definitely deserves his place on the list, and look this week he makes his first appearance at number 7. I love my job.

"Congratulations Nev. Number seven eh? I was Number One for about two years."

"Yeah, ok. I noticed that you didn't really date anyone other than Hermione and the Potions Princess while you were number one Mr. Smooth I doubt Hermione was even aware of the list, and I doubt the Princess cared. What worries me is how Hannah is going to think about this? I'm finally dating someone who actually likes me. Is this going to screw it up?"

"I don't know, but I think you're going to find out. Here she comes."

Neville's eyes got wide; he snatched the magazine away and stuffed it inside his robes.

Hannah Abbott slammed another copy of the magazine on the table in front of Neville.

“Care to explain this Neville?”

“I had nothing to do with it Hannah, they didn’t even speak to me.”

“I suppose you think I’m the kind of woman who would be happy dating the seventh most eligible bachelor in magical Britain.”

“Hannah, I promise you, I had nothing to do with this.”

Hannah took hold of Neville’s lapels, and pulled him up until he was standing. “You listen to me Neville Longbottom, the man I date is always and forever the Number One Most eligible bachelor until I decide to either marry him or dump him!” She kissed him hard, and then pushed him back down to his seat on the bench. “There may be some stupid girls who suddenly think that since you’re on this stupid list, you are suddenly interesting. Just you remember Neville Longbottom. I. Do Not. Share.” She poked him in the chest once for each of her last four words before turning and returning to the Hufflepuff table.

“Doesn’t appear to have screwed it up Nev”

“Wow.”

“Hannah didn’t seem to terribly upset.”

“Wow.”

“Hey Nev, wanna know a secret?”

“Wow.”

Harry leaned forward and whispered in Neville’s ear. “I own Teen Witch Weekly. You’re Number One next week and every week after that until I tell them to stop.”

“You bastard.”

“I thought it was the very least I could do for my best buddy. Hey, she liked Seventh place, how do you think she’ll like first?”

Neville considered for a moment. “Wow.”

···---ooo000ooo---...

“Mother.”

“Hello boys, will you be staying for dinner?”

“Fred and I have heard some disturbing rumors about Ron and Ginny.”

“Seriously bad rumors Mum.”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Harry and Hermione have told people that they were with Ron and Ginny last year due to being dosed with a love potion.” George said with an unreadable expression on his face.

“That’s preposterous.”

“Word has gotten to us that Ron has done some terrible things to Hermione.” Fred continued ignoring his mother’s denial

“Things Dad certainly wouldn’t approve of.”

“What are you insinuating?”

“We believe that you knew and supported them in what they were doing. There is no way either of them could have gotten away with it in your house without your knowledge. We know how hard it is to sneak things around you, and neither of them are sneaky enough to get away with it.”

“That and your ‘funny stories’ about dosing dad when you were in school.” Added George.

Perhaps you’ve forgotten Mother, our family owes Harry at least two life debts. At least two.”

“More like three times, but we can’t prove it.”

“You’ve done horrible things Mother. We need to speak with dad, and then we need to see what we can do to make this up to Harry and Hermione.”

Molly was furious. “Who do you think you’re speaking to?”

“The woman who always told us that we should do the right thing.” George said.

“The woman who told us we would come to bad ends.” Added Fred.

···---ooo000ooo---...

“Welcome home Miss Dora.”

“Hello Wissy. Is my mother home?”

“Yes Miss Dora, Mistress Andy is in her studio. Will you be staying?”

“That depends on Mum Wissy.”

Nymphadora Tonks made her way to her Mother’s studio. She knocked on the door. Andromeda Tonks was an artist who worked in stone and metal, entering her studio uninvited could result in injury, be it from molten metal or flying chips of marble and other stone.

“Come in.”

Nymphadora opened the door and entered the room, finding her mother at her drafting table planning her next project. “Hello Mum.”

“Dora! Welcome home. To what do I owe the visit? Missing your ancient mum?”

“I’ve had some problems mum, I was wondering if I might move back home for a while.”

Andromeda arched an eyebrow. Dora asking to come home? These ‘some problems’ must be horrific.

“Of course you can come back Dora; our doors are always open to you. I have to ask though, because your father will ask me. What is wrong? How can we help?”

“I’ve lost my job Mum. Amelia Bones found out I was working on a special project for Dumbledore and terminated me.”

“What did that manipulative man have you doing?”

“He was trying to make sure that the old families supported Harry Potter. Potter was sniffing around a Muggle born and the Professor wanted him steered toward a pure blood girl of a light family.”

Andromeda’s face paled. “What did you do Dora. Tell me exactly what you did. This is more important that you realize.”

Nymphadora blushed. “I don’t think that I should...”

“Nymphadora, you tell me what you did, right now. You may have risked your life. I need to know what you did, when you did it.”

“Dumbledore had the two youngest Weasleys dose Harry Potter and Hermione Granger with a slave/love potion and the Weasley’s were given the control potion. The slave potion only works as long as the target is getting frequent sex. Molly Weasley wouldn’t allow her daughter to service Harry Potter, the Headmaster asked me to wear Ginny Weasley’s face and have sex with Harry.” The metamorphamagus blushed a bit, embarrassed for telling her mother, not for what she had done. “I did, three times a

week for nine months. Madam Bones found out and terminated me.”

“Sweet Merlin. You still have no idea what you have done do you?”

“I know it was wrong Mum, I knew it as I was doing it, but it was for Dumbledore.”

“Who risked your life and magic, not his own. Dora, who is Harry Potter?”

“He’s the boy who lived. Some say ‘the chosen one’.”

“You stupid, stupid girl. He is the head of our family. Within hours of being informed of his inheritance, he reinstated me into the family, paid my dowry, and set you up with your own vault, remember? In accordance with family rules, we, you and I, swore to serve Lord Black as part of that reinstatement. You remember that don’t you?”

“Well, yeah, but that was all just ceremony wasn’t it?”

“NO!” Andromeda forced herself to calm down. “Dora that was a magical contract. You betrayed your Lord. If he wants retribution, he could demand your magic, or your life and you would instantly lose them.”

Nymphadora paled to match her mother. “What should I do?”

“You are going to your old room and staying there until I can speak with Lord Black and try to fix this. You are going to apologize to Lord and Lady Black and to Lady Potter, and you are going to mean it. You are going to stay away from

Dumbledore. Harry Potter is a good and honest young man; I'm praying that he will spare your life."

···---ooo000ooo---...

Remus Lupin sat in his small apartment staring into the fire.

"Stay away Remus" Dumbledore had said. "Harry is having enough problems without being actively associated with a Werewolf. He needs time to come to grips with what he will become. Go to the packs, tell them of our goals, and bring them to the light."

Like a fool, he had listened to the old man, just as they had always listened to the old man. He had told James and Lilly to hide under the fidelus instead of running to Canada like Lilly had wanted. James and Lilly were killed. He told Sirius to let him take Harry, to protect him. Sirius had been free to chase Peter, and be framed, sent to Azkaban. He sent Harry to the Dursley's for 'protection', and allowed the child to be mistreated, over worked, and underfed.

Dumbledore was still telling him to stay away, to work with the packs to bring them to the light. Meanwhile Harry had run away. Harry had disappeared. Harry had married, twice. Harry was the son of two of the few friends he had ever made, the Godson of the best friend of his life. Harry was, well, Harry. It just wasn't possible to not love the boy.

The Full moon was three nights away. He would decide what to do after that horrible distraction was gone.

···---ooo000ooo---...

“Mr. Weasley, Miss Weasley, sit down.”

Ron sat; he focused all his attention on his Head of House. This could not be good, and what with the stories of potion abuse flying about he knew what the discussion was going to be about.

“I have confirmed the potion rumors that are running rampant in the castle with both the Potters and the Headmaster. The Potters are understandably angry with you. The Lady Black even more so. The Headmaster is still insisting that what he and you did was for “the Greater Good” whatever that means.” Professor McGonagall looked pained. “Let me explain to the pair of you what is going to happen now. The two of you are going to stay away from the Potters. Full Stop. There will be no social mingling, no conversations over meals, nothing. Any person in a relationship with either of you will be checked for potion exposure. If they are found to be influenced by a potion, the Aurors will be notified for a full investigation. The Potters have evoked full line protection privileges. This means that they can legally challenge anyone who interferes with their family line to honor duels. Honor duels to the death. I have Owled your parents to apprise them of the situation and it is my sincere hope that they withdraw both of you from school.”

She removed her glasses and cleaned them. “I have been an instructor at this school for a very long time. I can honestly say that I have never been more disgusted by the behavior of any students before today. The fact that you are both Gryffindors makes it even worse. If Harry decides to play Quidditch this year, you two are off the team, though if I know your team mates, and I do, you’re probably off it now. Now get out of my sight.”

···---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione was ensconced at her favorite table doing some last minute review prior to class the next day. Daphne had asked her for some time with Harry. Hermione couldn't decide if she pitied or envied her sister-wife. This was the seventh night since Daphne had married them and the compulsion was still with her. Her own passion for the man hadn't abated in the slightest. He was gentle and considerate, so completely unlike...

The confrontation with Ron was coming, she knew it. It was hard to miss him staring at Harry and her when ever they were in the same room. Fortunately her best efforts hadn't overcome his innate laziness. He wasn't in many of her classes, while Harry was. (Though oddly Daphne was in more).

"There you are."

That will teach me to think about him. "Ron I know you were instructed to stay away from me."

"McGonagall can squawk all she wants. No one keeps me from what is mine."

Hermione's eyes flashed angrily. "Ronald Weasley I am not now, and have never belonged to you, you egotistical twit. I am married to Harry. Get away from me."

"Maybe you've forgotten, but I know how much you loved me. Potter isn't stealing you from me."

“You dosed me with a potion, you cretin. I detest you. Get away from me.” Hermione gathered her things, crammed them into her book bag and stood to leave.

Ron blocked her way and placed his hands on her shoulders. “I’ll make you remember!”

Hermione drove her knee into his groin hard. Ron fell to the ground in pain, she kicked him a couple more times for good measure. She hissed “If you EVER touch me again, I will give you to Harry. He wants to kill you so badly, and there is nothing you could do to stop him. Stay away from me!”

…---ooo000ooo---...

A very angry Hermione approached the portrait leading to their quarters.

“Miss Granger.”

Dumbledore and a woman Hermione did not recognize were approaching.

“Yes Headmaster?” she said, forcing herself to calm down.

“Miss Granger, this is Andromeda Tonks, she has come to speak with your husband.”

Tonks. Ok, got the frame of reference now. “Harry has retired for the evening Headmaster.”

“Come now Miss Granger, it is not yet half past Nine. Mr. Potter is a fabled night owl, do you expect us to believe that he is sleeping.”

Her anger came back with a vengeance. "Truth be told Headmaster, I don't really care all that much what you choose to believe. For the record, I didn't say Harry was sleeping. I said he had retired for the evening. I believe he is currently entertaining my sister-wife, the lady Black. I am not going to disturb them, and neither are you."

"You mean they are..."

"Come on Headmaster, married people did that when you were young as well."

"Lady Potter, I need to speak with Lord Black at his earliest convenience about a family matter."

"I understand Madam Tonks. We have class all day tomorrow. Harry should be available to meet with you at the Three Broomsticks tomorrow at 7pm."

"Tomorrow is not a Hogsmeade visiting day Miss Granger. The meeting will be in my Office."

"With all due respect Headmaster, the hell it will. Simply put Harry doesn't trust you, neither does Daphne nor I. All three of us are of age, the school rules do not preclude the Head of a House from taking care of his responsibilities. We will go to the Three Broomsticks tomorrow to take care of Harry's Family business. Unless you have an educational reason to forbid it, what Harry does is none of your business."

...---ooo000ooo---...

Tom Riddle pondered what he had learned. When Potter had discovered Dumbledore's duplicity with the love potions, he had escaped and disappeared. Now Potter has returned to Hogwarts married to two women. A pureblood and a mudblood. What was the boy up to? Where Riddle had killed the woman who controlled him, having confirmed that the woman who held Potter's thrall was the youngest Weasley, Riddle knew that Potter had left her untouched.

Riddle knew he had fixated on Potter, and was neglecting his own campaign for power and control in doing so, but that damned prophecy weighed on him constantly. He and Potter had so much in common, yet the boy was taking a completely different path when faced with the same situations.

The boy was a puzzle. A puzzle that Riddle was growing to hate..

Intelligence was beginning to come in from Hogwarts. Several students, not all from Slytherin, were reporting Potter's actions to their parents. He reread the letter that Lucius Malfoy had submitted:

Father:

In accordance with your wishes, here is the first of my reports of the actions of Potter. As was rumored, the halfblood has married, further sullyng his line by taking the mudblood Granger as his wife. Unexpectedly he has also taken Daphne Greengrass as his wife to continue the Black line he stole from me.

Potter is apparently at odds with Dumbledore, he is confrontational towards the old fool, openly defiant and

publicly dismissive of established traditions. Dumbledore of course does nothing about this. Saturday Morning, in a display of magic of a magnitude I have only seen bettered by our Lord, Potter attacked Professor Snape, destroying his wand and severely damaging his hand. Even this was not punished. Potter also sought to provoke me into a confrontation, but as you taught me, I punished him for his arrogance.

As stated before Potter's magic is at a level beyond anything I have ever seen from him. He and his 'wives' have left the traditional dormitories and reside in a set of apartments set aside for married students that I was heretofore unaware of.

I have attempted to contract Daphne Greengrass, but she has only rarely been separate from Potter and/or his Mudblood. I will continue in this attempt.

As always father, I await your instructions.

Draco.

As usual, Draco was a self aggrandizing fool. It constantly amazed him that Draco Malfoy was the 'Prince' of Slytherin house. In his day a fool like that would have been destroyed by his housemates before he had been allowed to sully the reputation of the House. Better, more detailed descriptions of the encounter had come from 6 other students. Potter had been punishing the younger Malfoy for using his mouth without using his mind when Severus had interfered, then Potter had punished his potions master for not minding his own business. Severus had then attempted to attack Potter when his back was turned. Potter's response was devastating AND completely wandless. This was disturbing.

Riddle had been twice Potter's age before he could be that casual with wandless magic.

As amusing as it was watching the Light tear its self apart, Riddle knew that he was going to have to move against Potter, before the boy became powerful enough to have a chance against him. Perhaps a feint against Dumbledore would inspire a false sense of security in the boy...

Potter was also Lord Black, as Draco's whining had reminded him. Orion Black had been an influential figure among the Dark families, even assisting Riddle himself back at the beginning. Lucius could request a meeting with the head of his wife's house, once there the Patriarch of the Minor house of Malfoy would be in the position to redeem himself making up for his multitude of failures.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Albus Dumbledore sat in his office, ignoring the glare coming from his familiar. Fawkes was a terribly intelligent creature, equal to most people. He understood most things said in the Headmasters office and everything Dumbledore did or thought. That was the curse and gift of a familiar.

Potter was lost to him, this was clear. There would be no breaking up of the family the boy had built around himself. The sheer intelligence of the Granger girl had startled him during her first year. If only he had followed his first inclination and gotten her parents to withdraw her after that first year. The injection of her intelligence into the dynamic of Potter/Weasley had kept the youngest Weasley from joining to form a trio. A trio already existed and the youngest Weasley was relegated to a minor player in Potter's life. While Potter had risked his life for young Ginny in his second

year, it was the Granger girl whose bedside he had haunted while she was petrified. It was only luck that had kept Hermione Granger alive. When Dumbledore had lured the basilisk into the halls, he hadn't expected the girl to be looking around corners with a mirror. The annoying know-it-all was supposed to have died then.

With Potter beyond his grasp, Dumbledore was limited in his options. Facing Riddle himself would be risky. That left Longbottom. His sources told him that Longbottom had recently taken up with Hannah Abbott. As a halfblood, she would not do of course. Something would have to be done about this.

····ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Thirteen – Family

The September air was made for running this morning. Harry had not managed to work up a sweat until the second lap around the lake. Returning to their apartments he luxuriated in the hot shower and was pleasantly surprised when Hermione had joined him, then he was startled by her ravenous need for him. They made love in the shower, Hermione guiding the driving needful coupling until she came hard, then clinging to him until he finished.

“I’m not complaining.” Harry rubbed her briskly with a large towel, “What brought that on?”

“Ron.”

“What did he do?”

“He accosted me in the Library last night.”

“Did he hurt you?”

“No, he grabbed me, and I kicked him where it hurt. He won’t do that again.”

“Hermione, that’s how it started last time.” He wrapped her in the towel and pulled her to him. “If he hurts you in any way, I’ll kill him Hermione, I swear I will.”

“I know. I love you too. Dumbledore and Andromeda Tonks came by after you went to bed last night. She requested a family meeting with you to discuss Tonks. I scheduled it for 7pm tonight at the Three Broomsticks.”

“I wondered if anything would come from them.”

“Daphne needs to be there. I can be if you want me.”

“Hermione, I always want you. You’d best get dressed slowpoke, got to get breakfast before class.”

“I’m sorry about in the shower, after Ron and Dumbledore last night I just...”

“Hermione, the day you have to apologize to me for wanting to make love will be the day you need to do me a favor and kill me. I’ll be so far gone it would be a mercy killing.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

To his endless amusement, Daphne WAS bright-eyed at breakfast on the day classes started. He started wondering just how different his ladies really were.

Evidently, Ron’s encounter with Hermione was not as covert as they had both assumed. Whispers skittered between the tables as the assembled students waited to see what Harry would do. They were disappointed when Hermione, Daphne, and Harry simply sat at the Gryffindor table and sat eating and speaking quietly with Neville Longbottom. The crowd disappointedly took to ignoring them and eating their own breakfasts.

By the time Professor McGonagall was coming over with the class schedules most people had finished eating and were sipping tea. Ron, of course, continued to shovel food down

his throat like a starving man. Harry levitated a banana and two plums over in front of the red head.

“Oh Ron?” He arranged the fruit into a somewhat vulgar anatomical configuration. “Remind you of anything?”

Ron ignored the hovering fruit. “Is that pitiful display supposed to impress me Potter?”

“Actually no.” the fruit suddenly blurred and a slick paste slowly oozed onto Weasley’s plate. “It’s supposed to worry you. Consider that for a moment. 15 feet away, and no wand. Just imagine what I could do...” Harry smile at his first friend. “My best advice would be to stay away from my wife Ronald. Concentrate on a woman who wants something to do with you, if you can find one.”

····ooo000ooo---

With no class until the second period of the day Harry walked his ladies to their Arithmancy class, silently chiding himself for not applying himself in his studies earlier in his life and being it this class. Somehow the things that had been important had paled into insignificance over the last few years. After seeing Daphne and Hermione into their classroom he made his way to the library to prep for the double DADA class that followed this first period of the day.

Once he got to the Library he found that he really couldn’t concentrate on the text. Thoughts of Ron and his encounter with Hermione refused to leave him alone. Professor McGonagall had told him to leave her alone, Hermione had made the point painfully last night, and Harry had threatened

the man this morning, but the look in Ron's eyes told Harry that it was far from over.

Harry pulled a fresh sheet of parchment from his bag and began a most painful letter.

Mr. Weasley:

I hope this letter finds you in good health.

I am sorry to bother you with this sir, but I do not believe I have any choice in the matter. It might be best if I begin this with a short recap of recent history, at least from my point of view.

At the beginning of our 6th year, Hermione Granger and I started to date. At the beginning of this relationship, Headmaster Dumbledore approached me and suggested that even the prospect of my bringing Miss Granger into the Potter line would upset some of the 'old families' of the Light. He suggested that Miss Granger might be better suited for life with Ron, and that I should seek out a 'Pureblood' girlfriend, suggesting Ginny specifically. I am afraid that I did not react favorably to these suggestions and rather pointedly suggested that the Headmaster stay out of my personal life.

On Halloween of last year, Hermione suddenly dropped me for Ron, and they dated exclusively until late July of this year. A week later I suddenly found myself deeply involved with Ginny, and we dated exclusively until, again late July of this year. During this year, Ron and Hermione began an intimate relationship, one that involved at least three intimate encounters a week. At the same time, my fantasy life began a particularly vivid period, where I dreamed of making love with Ginny at least three times a week.

Why am I telling you this sir?

In Late July, Hermione discovered this enclosed Diary. Yes, it is Ginny's, and yes Hermione reading it was a betrayal of trust. Please note the marked pages.

In summary of what Hermione learned from the diary: Headmaster Dumbledore supplied to Ron and Ginny a binary love potion. The first part places the drinker into a state of total devotion, the second, allows the drinker to control the first. And by control, I mean total, do absolutely anything with no thought of refusal for the controller.

My own enthrallment by Ginny is beside the point. It is over and I do not care about it at all. Ginny and I had no intimate contact sir, the sexual activity used to maintain the potions effectiveness was supplied by Auror Nymphadora Tonks, morphed into Ginny, coming to my bed at night. I honestly believed it to be a wet dream. Ron's enslavement of Hermione on the other hand is something I cannot and will not forgive. He has done horrible things to her, and though she agreed, and indeed even begged him to do those things to her while under the potion's influence she now thinks of it as rape and it weighs upon her terribly.

Upon reading Ginny's diary, Hermione left the Burrow and made her way to her parents, when she got home she found them under the Imperus Curse. An unforgivable curse not cast by a death eater, but by a member of the Order of the Phoenix, the aforementioned Auror Nymphadora Tonks. There was an altercation between Tonks and Hermione and Hermione escaped. She made her way to me, and we went to ground for the rest of the summer as muggles. The one

place we knew that neither the Order nor the Death Eaters would stand much of a chance of finding us.

During this time over the summer Hermione and I rediscovered our feelings for each other. In a combination of Love and a desire to protect her we married. I then activated the Line Protection Privileges. Over the summer I also discovered that there was an active Marriage Contract on the House of Black, said contract was executed linking me to Daphne Greengrass.

Again, why am I telling you this? In short since our return to Hogwarts Ron has been a problem. After the first day Ginny has stayed away from me, but despite being asked by Hermione to leave her alone, and told by Professor McGonagall to leave us both alone, last night he accosted Hermione in the Library and laid hands on her. She hurt him to get him to leave her alone, and this morning to my shame I threatened him.

Mr. Weasley, the time I have spent with your family are the best times of my life. The greatest honor I have ever been given were the times that the Twins called me an honorary Weasley. But sir, I have to say this. If Ron touches Hermione again, I don't know what I will do. I am honestly afraid that I will hurt him badly. Mr. Weasley, Ron is the brother I never had, but always wanted, just as Mrs. Weasley and yourself are the parents I always dreamed of. Please sir, please, get through to Ron, please make him stay away from Hermione.

Please sir, I don't want to hurt my brother. I am terrified that I might kill him.

Harry.

···---ooo000ooo---...

“Molly, I don’t know what you were thinking.”

“Arthur, He needs to be with her. They were meant to be together.”

“If they were meant to be together, then they would have been together. Your using potions on them, that’s tantamount to rape.”

This argument had been going on for hours. In his life he had never seen his twin sons so serious, so angry. When they told him what was being said about his youngest son and only daughter he couldn’t believe it. Molly’s denials the previous evening seemed sincere. Then at lunch he received the letter from Harry.

Molly was in this up to her eyebrows. This weekend there would be a family conference at Hogsmeade. All of his children would be there, or there would be hell to pay. Arthur Weasley was going to have his answers.

···---ooo000ooo---...

“Welcome to the Three Broomsticks Mrs. Tonks, Miss Tonks. Please have a seat.”

“Thank you Lady Black.” Andromeda took the offered chair, Nymphadora, silent for once, did the same.

“You wanted to speak with me Mrs. Tonks.”

“Yes Lord Black. I would like to discuss my daughter’s offenses against you.”

Harry nodded. “Go on.”

“My daughter was influenced by Albus Dumbledore. I’m not excusing her behavior, simply explaining it.”

“Miss Tonks.” Daphne interjected. “When you were taken into the Black Family you took an oath. Do you recall what it was?”

Nymphadora Tonks stood, her eyes down cast. “I swore my Honor, my Life, and my Magic in service to Lord Black.”

“Since my marriage to Lord Black I have researched our family traditions. Lord Black did not require that oath did he?”

“No my Lady. He said that he thought it was silly, that we shouldn’t have to swear an oath to have what were ours by birth.”

“Yet you and your mother both insisted in swearing the Black family traditional oath of fealty did you not.”

“I did my Lady.”

“So, you knowingly violated the Oath you insisted on.”

“I... Yes Lady Black. I did.”

“When you placed the Grangers under the Imperius curse, were you under Dumbledore’s orders?”

“No Lord Black. It seemed the best way to complete my mission.”

“That best way should have gotten you a one way trip to Azkaban.” Harry looked annoyed. “What part of completing your mission was covered when you assaulted Hermione Granger?”

“I... I was angry.”

“I bet. You were late for a night with me as I recall. You took from me something I wanted to give the woman I loved. I could say I didn’t like what we did, but obviously I did. Truly Nymphadora,” he smiled when she tensed at the use of her given name. “If that was all you had done, we wouldn’t be having this conversation, I never would have spoken with Madam Bones, and you would still be an Auror. But you hit a defenseless girl. Well, you assumed she was defenseless; she cleaned your clock pretty well, magically and physically. To my mind, that is your crime.”

Daphne decided to end this before Harry got angry. “What do you think your punishment should be Miss Tonks?”

Nymphadora hung her head. “I should be ejected from the family, Lady Black.”

“In as much as my husband wouldn’t let me take your life, I would have to agree Miss Tonks. Our Lord however has other ideas.”

“You are not to be ejected from the Family Miss Tonks, nor will you lose your life or magic.”

“Thank you my Lord.”

“Don’t thank me yet. Your penance will be this. You will introduce yourself as, and answer cheerfully to your given name. You will no longer identify yourself by your surname.” Harry smiled. “Your parents gave you the name for a reason, learn to love it.”

“I believe that concludes our business for the evening. Good Night.”

Andromeda stood, relieved beyond all belief. “We thank you for your mercy Lord Black. Thank you for your time and counsel Lady Black. Our apologies for how you were treated Lady Potter.” Nymphadora stood next to her and together they left the Three Broomsticks. Once out in the street Nymphadora broke the silence.

“He did that to humiliate me.”

“Of course he did ‘Dora. You assaulted a woman he loves and attempted to return her to slavery. He resented what you did to him, but that isn’t what made him angry. Rather it was what you have done to his wife. He could have killed you, or taken your magic, which is what Sirius’s father would have done. You got off easy. Learn to live with it.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Walking back to the castle, Harry marveled at how much his life had changed in the last few months, to the point where

he was now walking hand in hand with not one, but two beautiful women.

“I can’t believe you let her off so easily.”

“Daphne, given my options I did what I had to do. I wasn’t going to kill her for what she did, that would be barbaric. Yes she hurt Hermione, but Hermione is a big girl, she cleaned Nymphadora’s clock for her. She was following Dumbledore. Until this summer I was following Dumbledore. Besides,” he gave her an evil grin. “You have no idea just how much Nymphadora hates her name.”

“Harry’s right. She probably would have preferred to have had her magic taken.” Hermione giggled.

“All right, fine.” Daphne frowned. “What are we going to do about Ron Weasley?”

“I dealt with him Daphne.”

“I know you think you did Hermione. I heard at least four variations of your encounter last night. None from you, which I find a little disappointing.”

“I wasn’t hiding it from you, I just didn’t want you rampaging off and killing him.” She thought for a second. “Ok, maybe I was hiding it from you.”

“Hermione, don’t hide things from me. I can help. I won’t hurt him. If he touches you again, he will never know what hit him.” Daphne smiled. “It will be slow and painful, I can promise that.”

The rest of the pleasant walk back to the castle was spent in quiet conversation. Harry made note that he should probably never annoy his second wife.

...---ooo000ooo---...

“You wanted to see me Professor?”

“Yes Miss Brocklehurst. I was hoping that you could help me.”

Mandy Brocklehurst was taken aback. Then Professor Flitwick had told her that the Headmaster wanted to speak with her, she immediately started running through her actions since school had started to determine what, if anything, she might have done to merit being sent to the Headmaster. His asking for her help was not expected.

“If I can help in any way Professor, I would be honored to.”

Dumbledore smiled. This might just work out.

“Tell me Miss Brocklehurst, how well do you know Neville Longbottom?”

“I know him well enough to say hello. My grandmother and his are friends, I’ve been to his home once or twice, and he to mine.”

“I have recently discovered a prophecy that tells me that young Neville is the one to confront and defeat Voldemort.”

The girl paled. “But I thought that was Harry Potter.”

“As did I, his unfortunate changes in attitude this year caused me to research the subject in more depth. I have found that the prophecy actually points to Mr. Longbottom as the Chosen One.”

“How can I help Professor?”

“Unfortunately Mr. Longbottom has fallen in with Mr. Potter. I’m afraid that Mr. Potter’s relationship with Daphne Black has exposed him to Dark aspects of magic.”

That rocked Mandy back. Harry Potter was dark? Sure he married a Slytherin, but Harry Potter dark?

“It is my belief that Mr. Longbottom needs to be led back to the light so that he will be capable of standing up to Voldemort. This is where I thought that you might come in.”

“How can I help Professor?”

“Mr. Longbottom is currently dating Miss Abbott. She is a wonderful young woman, but the Light families are unlikely to accept the mingling of an ancient bloodline like the Longbottoms and a Muggle born. I am suggesting that a young woman of impeccable breeding such as your own would be a much better match, especially since Mr. Longbottom has taken his hereditary seat on the Wizengamot. He needs the quiet guidance of a young woman of quality.”

“But if he is already dating Hannah Abbott, how am I supposed to break them up?”

“I can arrange for Mr. Longbottom to start receiving a potion in his meals that will allow you to exert some influence over him.”

“A potion?”

“You would of course need to take the keying agent to allow you to exert said influence.”

“I’m not sure that I would be the right person for this Professor. I mean, I’m a pureblood, but my family isn’t famous or powerful. We’ve always just been merchants.”

“Indeed Miss Brocklehurst. This is exactly why I thought you might be perfect for bringing Mr. Longbottom back to the light. You are grounded and focused, without the airs of many of your peers.” He paused, his eyes twinkling. “Imagine what an alliance with the Longbottom house could mean for your family.”

Mandy knew what that alliance could mean for her family. Oddly she could no longer recall the reasons she had been against the idea only a few moments before. She weighed the benefits to herself and her family over the costs of a relationship with a man she didn’t know.

“Your guidance of Mr. Longbottom could possibly make the difference between whether or not the Light prevails in the war with Voldemort.”

“I guess I can try Professor. I will try, for the Light.”

“Excellent Miss Brocklehurst. You will make the difference in how this war turns out. In order to maintain the

effectiveness of the potion, you will need to engage in sexual activity with Mr. Longbottom at least every third day.”

Mandy had lost her virginity at the age of 14 to an upperclassman, discovering that she enjoyed the act quite a bit, and since then she had found a series of willing partners. Bedding a rich boy who could quite likely become her husband would not be a problem at all.

“I don’t think I will have a problem with that, Professor.”

“Excellent.” Dumbledore handed the girl a small vial. “This is the first dose of your control potion. Mr. Longbottom will receive his first dose with his breakfast tomorrow. It is important for you to establish your first contact with him, preferably touching him anywhere on his bare skin, just a brush is sufficient contact. On the fifth day he will be sufficiently conditioned that he will respond violently if he sees you with another man. Select a house mate, when Mr. Longbottom reacts, simply kiss him. It is important that you exchange bodily fluids, so an open mouth kiss is what you want. He will then be yours.”

The girl unstopped the vial and downed the potion. Dumbledore smiled. It had taken a fair amount of compulsion to get the girl to agree, but now she believed it to be her idea. He had begun to suspect that he would have to go outside the school for someone to control Longbottom, having interviewed and obliterated five girls before Mandy. Tomorrow Neville Longbottom would be taking his first steps toward becoming the Chosen one.

····ooo000ooo····...

Hermione was in full research mode. Harry and Daphne were working on assignments, but the Charms essay (not due for three weeks) Hermione was started on required books from the library. She had gathered the books she needed. After checking them out from a grudging Librarian she was returning to their apartments.

Walking along, one of the four books open in her free hand and already reading, she never heard the whispered “Stupefy!” that caused her to slump to the ground like a puppet with it’s strings cut.

····ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Fourteen – Almost A Rescue

Hermione was walking from the library to her apartments reading one of her newly acquired library books, already researching her essay. She turned a corner into one of the darker hallways in the castle never hearing the whispered “Stupefy!” that caused her to slump to the ground like a puppet with it’s strings cut.

Stepping from the shadows, Ginny Weasley looked at the girl on the floor with satisfaction. “Ron! Get out here.” She pocketed her wand and picked up the books her former friend had dropped when she fell. Ron came out of the shadows and lifted Hermione’s inert form to his shoulder, then entered the room of requirements.

Ron laid Hermione upon the bed the room had provided and growled at his sister “Get out.”

“Not so fast, this is going to get us both what we want.” Extracting a vial from a pocket the younger girl tipped Hermione’s head back and poured the potion into her mouth. “You need to wait 5 minutes for the fertility potion to take effect.” A second potion followed the first, in her haste, Ginny spilled most of it down Hermione’s neck. “The lust potion should have her almost as enthusiastic as you. Wake her up after you get started.”

Ginny exited the room as Ron began pulling Hermione’s clothing off. This would work. It might take a while, but it would work. If Ron and Hermione were found in full rut, Harry would know. Hermione’s denials would be shown to be lies by the recording crystals Ginny had planted. If they weren’t found and Hermione never told Harry, he would know when the child was born. A red headed Weasley infant

would be proof positive that Hermione was a slut not to be trusted. Then Harry would belong to her. He would beg her to join him. There was no way that Slytherin slut could give him what he needed. This would be perfect.

···---ooo000ooo---...

Harry looked up from his potions essay. 9:30.

“Hermione’s late.” Daphne noted.

“The Library is open for another half hour. You know how she gets with her research.”

Daphne didn’t seem convinced. “I don’t know, she said she’d be right back.”

“Let me find the map.”

Daphne watched as he entered his room. Map? What map?

···---ooo000ooo---...

In the Ravenclaw common room Luna Lovegood was in one of the several study carrels accessing the Ravenclaw Information Matrix. She had just started a search on alternate brewing methods for a calming draught when she suddenly sat upright. Leaving all her things where they lay she grabbed her wand and ran for the door.

“Lovegood!” Su Li called. “Lovegood, where are you going? It’s past curfew!”

Luna ignored her and exited the Ravenclaw common room at a dead run.

···---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione's clothing was finally off. Some of the more frustrating articles had required cutting with his wand, but now she was the way Ron wanted her. She would be his again. Despite being stunned, the lust potion was definitely affecting her, a flush spread across her face and chest, her nipples were erect, and her hips were beginning to rock. Ron pulled his own clothing off and entered her. She would have his child, the first of many. She would be his again. He pointed his wand at her head and whispered "Rennervate!"

···---ooo000ooo---...

Harry emerged from his room with the Marauders map, and opened it on the table. "I solemnly swear I am up to no good!" Daphne marveled as the map unfolded and drew the castle, then populated itself with tiny icons indicating the people within the castle walls.

"About everyone should be in their dorms, so..." he searched the map. "She's not in the Library."

"Ginny Weasley's heading for the Gryffindor Tower. Luna's running away from her dorm. Why would she be running?"

"There she is. " Daphne pointed to the dot labeled Hermione Granger, another dot labeled Ron Weasley was imposed on top of Hermione. She looked up in horror and realization. "Harry?"

A sudden flash of fear hit them both, followed by a sense of... self loathing.

“That son of a bitch!” Harry snatched up his wand and headed for the exit to the halls. He was three strides behind Daphne.

····-ooo000ooo---...

Ginny was surprised to see Luna running toward her. She was even more surprised when Luna spat “Stupefy!” as she passed, never breaking stride. Ginny wasn’t surprised any longer as she slumped to the floor.

····-ooo000ooo---...

“Get off me you bastard!” Hermione screamed at him, furious at herself for how her body was betraying her. With only a partial dose of the lust potion, she had control of her mind, though her body was responding to him. She ground against him, inside her mind she screamed at herself to stop, to fight him.

“You know you want this.” Ron pinned her to the bed and he thrust into her. “You’re going to have my baby. There’s no way Potter would keep you with my kid in your belly. You’ll come live with us at the burrow.”

“Harry’s going to kill you. Get off me!”

Ron reared back and hit her, breaking her nose. “Watch your mouth. This is what you’re good for. This is...”

“Expelliarmus!” Ron was hit in the chest and thrown off Hermione into the wall, his wand falling to the ground. Luna stood in the doorway panting slightly, her gray eyes focused on him, blazing in fury. “Stupefy! Incarcerous!”

Daphne and Harry arrived at a full run, finding the door to the Room of Requirements still open, they entered to find Luna standing over Ron’s naked bound body, kicking him in a fury, and a naked Hermione curled into the fetal position, bleeding profusely from her broken nose and sobbing. Minerva McGonagall followed them in, having spotted the pair running through the halls, she had followed to find out what they were up to.

Without a word Harry wrapped Hermione in her school robe, and lifted her, heading to the door.

“I’m taking Hermione to Madam Pomfrey.”

“You’ll find Ginny Weasley stunned in the hallway half way to the Gryffindor tower. She has a pair of potions vials in the pockets of her robes.” Luna stopped kicking Ron and looked to the assistant Headmistress. “Her wand should be checked as well.”

“Professor,” Harry stopped at the door. “If you value their lives, they should be well away from the castle before I can find them.” He made eye contact with the older woman. “I claim full Line Protection rights.”

“I understand Mr. Potter. Get Hermione to Poppy right now.”

The raven haired man turned and carried the sobbing bloody girl from the room. Daphne approached Luna.

“Thank you.”

Luna shook her head, tears running down her cheeks. “I loved Ronald, loved him since I was 10 years old, and he became someone who could do this to a friend.” She kicked Ron again.

“Well he won’t be doing it again.” Daphne drew her wand and pointed it at Ron’s head. “Red...”

“Mrs. Black. Don’t do it.” Minerva took hold of her arm.

“After what he did?”

“Death is quick. Azkaban isn’t.”

“ Besides.” Luna kicked the unconscious man again. “Kicking the rapist bastard is so cathartic.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Walking as quickly as he could without jarring the sobbing woman in his arms, Harry made for the most direct route to the Hospital wing. Entering the ward, he gently laid Hermione on ‘his’ bed, then rushed to the door to Madam Pomfrey’s chambers and knocked. He then returned to Hermione’s side to await the school’s Healer.

They didn’t have to wait long, clad in a dressing gown, Madam Pomfrey found the Potters and immediately began her diagnostic scans.

“She was dosed with a potion, and he hit her. I think he broke her nose. She was raped.”

Madam Pomfrey cast diagnostic charms, and frowned.

“Ms. Granger, your nose is broken. I’m finding evidence of a fertility potion, and something else. I need to research what it is, but from the way your body is reacting, I’m guessing some type of lust potion.” The Healer lightly traced Hermione’s nose with both a finger and her wand. Hermione gasped as her face numbed, and her tears ebbed, Pomfrey then cleaned the blood from her face. “I’m going to try and find something to counter the lust potion. I’m sorry; there is no counter for the fertility Potion.”

“Did he... Am I...”

“I’m sorry Hermione, I’ve found semen in your vagina. We won’t know if there is a child for five of six days.” The Healer squeezed her hand. “I’m going to try and find a counter for the lust potion.”

“Oh god.”

Harry pulled a chair up to her bedside and took her hand. He raised it to his lips and kissed her palm. “Hey.”

“I’m so sorry Harry!”

“Sorry? For what?”

“I should have fought harder, I should have...”

“Quit it Hermione.”

“I should have...”

“You did nothing wrong. It wasn’t you.”

“It was the Weasleys.” Daphne said as she entered the room, pulling up a chair on the other side of the bed, and taking her other hand. “Evidently Ginny was the mastermind, while Ron was just following his crotch around.” She reached over and brushed hair out of Hermione’s eyes. “The Aurors have been called. McGonagall has their wands, and found a couple of vials with potion residue in them in Ginny’s robes.”

“What if I’m pregnant?”

“Then you’re pregnant.” He smiled. “I’ll spoil my kids rotten.”

“Our kids” Daphne corrected him.

“But it might not be yours”

“Hermione, if a baby comes from you, he or she is mine.”

“Any babies born to this family are going to have a loving father and a pair of strict but loving mothers.” Daphne grinned, “McGonagall wouldn’t let me kill him. Lovegood kicked him pretty good though.”

····ooo000ooo---...

Poppy looked out of her office to find her only patient changed into flannel pajamas curled up on her husband's lap sleeping in his arms. She quietly watched as Harry's other wife kissed him.

"See you in the morning. Keep her safe."

"Love you Daph."

"You too." She smiled at the look on his face. "No one is more surprised than me. Or Happier."

Poppy watched as the younger woman left for her apartments. She came out of her office.

"I can enlarge the bed Mr. Potter."

"Thank you Madam Pomfrey, Hermione's settled and sleeping. We'll be fine."

...---ooo000ooo---...

"Amelia, I'm sure that something can be worked out."

"Albus!" Minerva protested. "They perpetrated a premeditated rape of a classmate. Nothing can be worked out of that. Harry has proclaimed his Line Protection rights, he is completely within his rights to kill them both. If you leave them here, they are dead."

"I quite agree. Arthur a good man and a good friend, but his children have violated the law and must face the consequences. It will hurt him, but he would be the first to agree."

“ I do agree Albus. Ron and Ginny must face the consequences of their actions. Further I suggest that you must as well.” Arthur Weasley had just arrived via the flu. “You set this tragedy in motion with your grooming Harry to suit the old families.”

“Arthur makes an excellent point Albus. Your involvement with all this will be examined quite thoroughly. I need to speak with the Potters.”

“I’ve spoken with Poppy. Hermione had a broken nose, exposure to a lust potion and fertility potion. She is sleeping now, and Harry is with her. Poppy says she won’t know if she is pregnant for five or six days.” Minerva shook her head, unshed tears welling in her eyes. “I would suggest that you wait until tomorrow. Harry is a very angry young man and probably would not take well to someone bothering his wife any more tonight.”

“ Amelia, I do expect to be present when my Minor Daughter is questioned.”

“Of course Arthur, I’m sorry it has come to this.”

“So am I Amelia.” Arthur fixed the Headmaster with a death glare. “So am I.”

“Did Molly come with you?”

Arthur looked around the Headmaster’s office. “I thought she followed me in here.” He paled. “Oh she wouldn’t.”

···---ooo000ooo---...

Molly stormed into the Hospital wing, and spotted Harry and Hermione cuddled in the arm chair. Her eyes blazing she drew breath to rage at them, and found herself silenced. Harry lifted Hermione to the bed.

“Don’t leave me.” She murmured.

“Just for a sec Love. Need to use the Loo.”

“’ kay.”

Harry gestured out the door. The still silenced Molly refused. Harry cast a silencing charm around Hermione’s bed, and canceled the charm on Molly.

“Get out of here now. Your family has done enough to her tonight.”

He followed her out into the hall.

“I am going to have my say. That little whore led poor Ron...”

“Mrs. Weasley, you have been the closest thing I’ve had for a mother, but if you call Hermione another name after what your kids did to her tonight I will hurt you so badly Madam Pomfrey will have to spend weeks putting you back together. You can say anything you want about me. You will NOT bother Hermione tonight. We need to be very clear on this. I have declared my Line Protection rights. I informed both Ron and Ginny of this Saturday morning. They were also told by Professor McGonagall. Tonight they stunned Hermione, dosed her with a fertility potion and a lust potion and your

son RAPED her. The moron must have thought that I would reject her if she had a child by rape. The only reason Ron is still alive is I didn't want to hurt Mr. Weasley, and Professor McGonagall stopped the Lady Black for killing him outright. I will press charges, and if is ever so much as see him again I will kill him. If I find out that you supplied the potions I will be pressing charges on you. No one hurts my wife. Ever. Go away now, and do not come back. The Weasleys and The Potters are done with each other."

He turned leaving the sputtering woman in the hallway. He returned to his wife.

"Hey, "he whispered, "want to stay on the bed or on the chair?"

"Bed. Hold me."

Harry kicked off his shoes and lay next to her, spooning into her and holding her firmly as she drifted off to sleep.

...---ooo000ooo---...

The Black/Potters entered the Great Hall in the morning to silence. As usual the rumor factory guaranteed that everyone knew what had happened. As they passed the Slytherin table, Susan and Hannah came to Hermione before the trio could sit down and pulled her into a hug, murmuring to her. The trio was guided to the Hufflepuff table where they sat to break their fasts.

As food and drink was taken for his wives plates Harry cast detection charms, his own clean, Hermione's clean, Daphne's ... a slight indication. Picking up her plate, he cast

it again. Nothing. He checked her goblet. Nothing. He lay the plate back on the table and cast again. A slight indication. Odd. The girls were watching him now. Daphne's plate was clean, her goblet was clean, but on the table, he got an indication of the slave potion. Hannah was sitting across from Daphne, he cast he detection charm on Hannah's plate. A full positive indication.

"Hannah, stop eating."

"What's wrong? What did you find?" she asked.

"You're being dosed with the same potion Hermione and I got last year. It's not in the food, it's on the plate."

Using a napkin, Hannah pushed the plate away.

"Excuse me for a second." Harry stood and crossed to the Gryffindor table.

"Neville, could I check something real quick?"

"What's up Harry?"

Harry cast the detection charm. Full positive. "Nev, your plate is contaminated with the same potions Hermione and I were dosed with last year."

"What?"

"Lets go see Madam Pomfrey." Harry conjured a bag and carefully placed the plate in it. He and Neville went to the Hufflepuff table, and he repeated bagging Hannah's plate.

“I want to take Hannah and Neville to Madam Pomfrey. Hermione, Daphne, do you want to come or go to class?”

“I couldn’t face the Hospital wing just now, I’ll go to class.”
Hermione said

Daphne added “I’ll keep her company and keep the gawkers away.”

“Be safe. Hermione if the day is too much for you, take the day off.”

Harry, Hannah, and Neville left the Great Hall. Daphne and Hermione finished their breakfasts and were idling over cups of tea when a majestic Eagle Owl alighted in front of them.

“That’s the Malfoy Owl” Daphne said. “What do you want?” she asked the bird.

The Owl gave the impression that it was beneath it’s dignity to be delivering mail to them, and slowly extended its leg with an envelope attached. Daphne removed the envelope and offered the Owl some bacon, which the bird pointedly refused, while remaining on the table.

“I think he’s expecting a reply.” Hermione offered.

Together they examined the letter. Addressed to Lady Black, it was on very expensive parchment.

Lady Black:

This letter is to request a meeting with our Lord Black. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss profitable opportunities for our family.

Given Lord Blacks current disagreement with Albus Dumbledore a meeting at this time could be advantageous.

Lucius Malfoy

“How stupid does he think Harry is?”

“It’s a pureblood thing Hermione, Lucius expects Harry to come running to the Dark Lord because he’s on the outs with Dumbledore. By the family bylaws Harry can’t refuse him, but I can rub his nose in his unworthiness.” She hesitated. “Should I ask Harry first?”

“No. He trusts you, do what you think needs to be done, Harry might not like what you do, but he would never second guess your choices. You know this Ancient and Noble House stuff, we don’t.”

Daphne nodded, and pulled out a sheet of parchment and quill.

Lucius Malfoy:

My Lord Black is far too busy to listen to the complaints and schemes of a minor in-law. However in the event Cousin Narcissa Black-Malfoy wishes an audience with Lord Black; he will be at the Three Broomsticks in Hogsmeade Friday evening at 7:30. Should Cousin Narcissa desire she may bring along her husband.

Daphne Greengrass-Black

The Lady Black.

“That should get his knickers in a twist.”

For a moment Hermione forgot her own pain. “You are one evil witch you know that? Remind me to never give you a reason to write a nasty letter to me.”

“It’s a gift” Daphne admitted as she tied the reply to the leg of the Malfoy’s owl.

····ooo000ooo---

“Mr. Potter was correct.” Madam Pomfrey shook her head in anger. “Both of you are showing signs of contamination by the Love slave potion, and the plates are the source. In both of you the contamination is extremely low level, no where near the level it would take to affect you.”

“Probably going to do it slowly, to make it less noticeable.” Harry pinched the bridge of his nose. A headache was coming on.

“Who would do this to us?” Hannah was clearly upset.

Neville on the other hand was furious. “Someone who tells the house elves what to do.”

“Madam Pomfrey, could you check one more thing for Neville?”

“What do you have in mind Mr. Potter?”

“Could you check Neville to see if there are any blocks on his magic?”

····ooo000ooo---

Chapter Fifteen – Healing Hearts

“Madam Pomfrey, could you check one more thing for Neville?”

“What do you have in mind Mr. Potter?”

“Could you check Neville to see if there are any blocks on his magic?”

····ooo000ooo····...

Tom Riddle was amazed at the news from Hogwarts. Were the fools of the light self destructing? The two youngest of the Weasley Blood-traitors participated in the rape of Potter’s wife?

“My son reports that Potter’s support is in tatters My Lord.” Lucius was positively beaming. “His Mudblood whore is probably pregnant with the Blood-traitor’s child. Draco reports rumors of a sworn Blood Feud between Potter and the Weasley clan.”

Riddle nodded. “My sources in the Ministry have are telling me that Dumbledore is under investigation for his manipulations of Potter. Bones herself is spearheading this investigation.” Riddle paused, Lucius tended toward being overly optimistic, was he being caught up in the same delusion? “What of your meeting with Potter?”

“It is scheduled for Friday evening My Lord.” Lucius didn’t mention his reaction to the answer to his request for a meeting, how he had raged through Malfoy Manor and killed one of his House Elves outright. Riddle had his own sources

for keeping an eye on Lucius, and knew of his tantrum. Riddle had a grudging respect for the new Lady Black. Potter could never have come up with that response. When Potter fell, perhaps this young woman could be bent to his will. A mind like that could be useful.

“Good. Make him an offer of an alliance, with a view toward destroying Dumbledore. Record the meeting Lucius. I want to see for myself his emotional state.”

“Of course My Lord.”

····ooo000ooo····...

Finished at the Hospital Wing, Harry returned to his apartments to get his things for class. He had missed the beginning of Transfiguration, and hoped that McGonagall wouldn't ream him too much for it. Stepping into the common room he found both Hermione and Daphne on one of the sofas, Hermione sobbing inconsolably, Daphne attempting to console her.

He rushed to them, kneeling between the women. “What happened?”

“I was ok at breakfast” Hermione choked out, “but sitting in the classroom, with everyone staring at me, talking about me, you weren't there, I just couldn't... I couldn't...”

“She broke down. There were some nasty things being whispered. I hexed one mouthy 5th year on the way back here.” Daphne had a haunted look of her own. “What the Weasley's did was a Death Eater tactic in the last war. They

dosed wives and daughters of strong men with lust potions, and sent recordings of the rapes, in attempts to break them.”

Harry drew both the women into his arms. “I’m so sorry” he whispered. “If I could take it all away I would.” He thought for a moment. “Do you need your mum Hermione? We could go to her, or they might want to come here...”

“NO!” Hermione almost screamed. “I couldn’t face them, I couldn’t... They would be...”

“ They would support you in any way you needed Hermione.” Harry released Daphne to hold Hermione in both of his arms. “This is nothing you did.”

“How can you stand to touch me? I’m dirty. I see it in your eyes. I see how people look at me. Why didn’t I fight harder? The way I responded to him, that couldn’t have entirely been the potion, I...”

“Stop it Hermione, you can’t do this to yourself, to us.” Daphne interrupted her. “You couldn’t control what the potion was doing to you any more than you could control what a blood replenishing potion does. Stop being stupid. You don’t do stupid very well.”

Hermione just couldn’t stop crying.

...---ooo000ooo---...

“Are you ok?”

Hannah looked deeply into Neville's eyes and shook her head. "After finding out that someone I trusted was willing to do this to us? No. I'm not alright at all."

The pair were walking around the lake in the late afternoon sun. Neville took her hand in his own. "Evidently, just being around me has a certain amount of risk. When we started this, neither of us knew that you were associating yourself with the Emergency Backup Boy Who Lived. If Dumbledore would do this, who knows what He-who-must-not-be-named..." Neville made a face. "That was stupid. If I'm going to help Harry face him, I can't be afraid of a name. Who knows what Voldemort will do? Maybe we should rethink 'us'."

"Oh, so suddenly, I'm not good enough for you?"

"What?" That wasn't the reaction Neville had expected. "No! I'm not good enough for you. Just being around me got you dosed with a slave potion. You should, I don't know, dump me publicly so that no one would think of using you to get to me."

"Neville Longbottom you listen to me. I have put far too much time and effort into turning you into an adequate boyfriend to walk away from you now and let some other girl profit from my hard work."

"But Dumbledore and Voldemort..."

"To hell with both of them. Harry will probably kill them both with your help." She took hold of the lapels of his robes and pulled him into a passionate kiss. "And another thing." She said after she broke the kiss, "You find out if there are any

open Marriage contracts on the House of Longbottom. I'm not as open minded as Hermione. Like I told you before, I don't share."

...---ooo000ooo---...

Augusta Longbottom wasn't a woman used to waiting. The presence of the woman in the waiting area of the Department of Mysteries caused more than a few of the normally unflappable Unspeakables to scurry away from the area as quickly and as inconspicuously as possible.

"Augusta? What are you doing here?"

"We need to speak Algie. I received an Owl from Neville this morning."

"Is he alright?" Algernon Croaker was a crusty old man, but Neville was his favorite (and only) great nephew. The boy was the last scion of four ancient families.

"He is angry. Very very angry. I've never even imagined Neville having something bad to say about anyone, but he..." she shook her head. "I need to know something Algie. You were one of the first on the scene when Frank and Alice were found. Was Albus Dumbledore there before you?"

"Yes he was Auggie, why? What's going on?"

"Neville discovered that he had blocks on his magic. Not 'a' block. Three blocks."

"Three? Merlin, we thought he was a squib. He suspects Dumbledore?"

“The Potter boy was also blocked. Neville was blocked. You know the prophecy, you told me about it yourself. What do the two of them have in common? Neville is convinced that the story Dumbledore has told everyone about Lilly Potter’s ‘sacrifice’ was so much vapor. He believes his friend Harry reacted to his mother’s death with a flare of accidentally magic that destroyed Voldemort’s body and destroyed the Potter house. He also believes that Dumbledore blocked his magic in order to have an, as Neville put it, ‘Emergency Backup Boy who Lived.’”

Algie Croaker frowned. “It might be time to confront Dumbledore with what we know.”

“Combined with what Neville has learned, it might be enough.” Augusta Longbottom nee Croaker drew herself to her full height. “If that old fool as much as looks at Neville again, I’ll kill him myself.”

····ooo000ooo····

Arthur looked up from his mug to survey what was left of his family. The twins were glaring at their mother. Percy was present, but angry at being summoned. Bill and Charlie were patently waiting, both had returned from abroad specifically for this meeting, and knew that their father wouldn’t call for a meeting without cause.

“Thank you for coming boys.” Arthur attempted a smile for his five oldest children. “I called this meeting over a matter of family honor.”

The three eldest Weasley siblings gasped. If there was one thing important to their father it was the family honor.

“What’s going on Dad? Obviously Ron and Ginny were going to be at the meeting when you had it scheduled at Hogsmeade, but suddenly it’s here at home. Are they in trouble?”

“Yes father, has Potter gotten them into difficulties again?” Percy earned himself a death glare from the twins.

Arthur shook his head. “I’d like you all to just listen to me as I explain the situation, unless I make a factual mistake, I would ask you to not interrupt, and allow me to get through this.” His assembled children nodded their understanding, his wife continued to glare at him.

“Last September on the ride to Hogwarts Harry and Hermione decided to become more than friends. Professor Dumbledore objected to this relationship on the basis that the old pureblood families of the Light would object to mixing the Potter line with a Muggle born for the second generation in a row. He approached your mother, Ron, and Ginny for a plan to ‘fix’ that.” Harry and Hermione were dosed with a love-slave potion keyed to Ginny and Ron respectively.”

“These potions required sexual activity to remain active in their systems. Ron made use of Hermione from November to July of this year. At your mother’s insistence Ginny remained a virgin. Nymphadora Tonks used her metamorphic abilities to assume Ginny’s appearance and went to Harry’s bed for the same period of time.”

There was silence at the table. Arthur sipped his tea, and found himself wishing that it was Firewhiskey instead. "In late July of this year, Hermione found Ginny's diary, where she had detailed the plan. She ran to Harry, and the pair of them went to ground as Muggles hiding from the Order as well as Voldemort. As some point between when they ran to purge themselves of the effects of the potions and their return to Hogwarts they married. Hermione became Lady Potter. Upon arrival at school, Harry announced his Line Protection rights. Minerva McGonagall specifically told Ron and Ginny to stay away from the Potters. Monday I received a letter from Harry, telling me that Ron was not staying away from Hermione, and begging me to keep him away so that Harry didn't have to kill the young man he thought of as a brother." He took another drink. "Monday night, Ginny stunned Hermione in the halls, dosed her with a fertility potion and a lust potion, and then gave her to Ron. Ron raped Hermione, breaking her nose in the process. She may well be carrying his child due to the fertility potion, Poppy won't be able to tell until Saturday or Sunday. Ron was caught in the act. Both he and Ginny are sitting in holding cells at the Ministry as we speak. Their trials are next month."

For several moments silence reigned in the Weasley kitchen. Then Bill rose from the table. He went to the cupboard where his father kept his Firewhiskey, and brought the bottle and seven glasses back to the table. He poured a shot for each Weasley, downing and refilling his own as he sat back down.

"What were they thinking? If absolutely nothing else, what about the life debts?"

“Everything we did was good for Harry.” Spat Molly to the horror of her children. If it weren’t for that damned Granger girl snooping in things that didn’t concern her, then we’d all be...”

“One big happy family” said Fred.

“What could be happier” added George.

“Than a family based on potions”

“And rape. Don’t forget the rape.”

“Oh, yes. The rape, I almost forgot.”

“How could you forget the cornerstone of a Big Happy Family.”

Bill reached over and smacked George on the back of the head, Charlie did the same to Fred.

“What will the family response be Father?” asked Percy with a frown.

“What we do will be my decision. I wanted this meaning to hear what each of you think on the subject so that I can consider your thoughts in making that decision.” He paused to decide what else to say. “As I see it, we have three options. First, we do nothing, let the justice system take its course and hope that Harry will not punish this family for the actions of a few.”

“Harry’s not after blood.” Fred spoke up.

“All he wanted was for Hermione to be left alone” agreed George.

“He’ll let the Ministry deal with it.”

“It’s unlikely he knows about any of the other options.”

“Or that he cares enough to research.”

“Second” Arthur started again. “We throw everything into the defense of Ron and Ginny.”

“What evidence does the Ministry have Father?” asked Percy.

“They have rune clusters that recorded Ron carrying an unconscious Hermione into a room, Ginny dosing her with the fertility potion, and spilling most of the lust potion down her neck, of Ron climbing on top of her, her screaming at him to get off of her, Ron breaking her nose, and Luna Lovegood blasting him across the room.”

“Where did they get recordings?”

“Your sister evidently thought that if she could show Harry a recording of Ron and Hermione in full rut, Harry would leave Hermione for Ginny.”

“She actually recorded herself?”

“Yes Charlie, she did.” Arthur pinched his nose, the headache was getting worse. “The third option is to eject the

offending members from the family. That should absolve us of the guilt involved.”

“No Arthur, you aren’t doing that, you are not going to eject Ron and Ginny from the family!”

“It is my responsibility to deal with the shame you have helped bring on to this family

····ooo000ooo---...

Luna skipped through the portrait hole into the married quarter’s common room. Hermione was sitting on one of the sofas, still in her pajamas despite it being well after 4 pm. She had her arms wrapped around her knees. Hermione was startled when Luna flopped onto the sofa next to her.

“Hello Hermione. Still unhappy?”

“How did you get in here Luna?”

“Harry had a meeting with Lucius Malfoy he had to go to, he tried to get out of it, but Daphne said he couldn’t without starting a lot of trouble. So he asked me to come and keep you from being alone. Daphne asked Tracy to do the same thing. She’ll be here in a minute.”

“I just want to be left alone.”

“No you don’t. You’re worried that you’re pregnant.” Luna suddenly became very interested in the still life of fruit on the wall next to the door to Hermione’s bed chamber. “You’re worried that you will have a constant reminder of Ronald’s betrayal.”

“No.”

“And you’re worried that the child would be a reminder to Harry of what was done to you and that he would pity you for it.” She pirouetted across the room. “Which is silly of course. If you were to have a child by a man other than Harry he would love it for being part of you. Of course all of this is moot, you aren’t pregnant.”

“What?”

“Harry would love any child you had.”

“No, after that.”

“You aren’t pregnant.”

“I’m not?”

“No. Even with a fertility potion, Ronald’s sperm was just too lazy to get the job done.” She lay on the sofa with her head in Hermione’s lap.

“How do you know?”

Luna shrugged. “How do I know any of the things I know? I see possibilities, as soon as the realities resolved I knew you were being attacked and responded accordingly. Now I can see that you aren’t pregnant.”

“Really?”

“ Really. Madam Pomfrey will confirm in the morning...” Luna got a far away look in her eyes. “Unless she doesn’t. The future is so hard. The present is so much easier.”

····ooo000ooo---

Harry, Daphne, and Neville Longbottom were waiting in the private room they had rented at the Three Broomsticks. Harry understood why he had to be here, but he was still angry over leaving Hermione alone. He hoped that Luna could keep her company without driving her crazy. The blonde had that effect on Hermione. Then again, perhaps the distraction of dealing with Luna’s rather individual view of the universe might be just what Hermione needed.

Daphne was also unset about what her sister-wife was going through. The trial in October was going to be hard on both Hermione and their husband. She smiled at herself. Less than two weeks had passed since they had entered into the contract marriage. Somehow, she had fallen in love with Harry Potter. The days since returning to Hogwarts had not been easy, but the time she spent with Harry and Hermione were beyond price. She hadn’t expected feeling like this. But did anyone truly expect how they felt through life?

Harry’s anger was a good thing, really. Tonight he was going to be dealing with the Malfoys, and knowing the Malfoys there might be danger. Danger beyond the expected Death Eater nonsense. Harry was very dangerous when angry. Daphne’s lips twitched into a small smile. Lucius might not know what hit him.

The door to the private room slammed open, Lucius Malfoy strode into the room as if he owned the place, his wife an obedient 4 paces behind him. With his trademark arrogant sneer he spat an order.

“Longbottom, take the Greengrass girl and leave. I will have words with Potter, alone.”

Harry’s anger flared, pushing his aura into the visible spectrum. He made a fist with his right hand and Malfoy’s sneer disappeared, his orders cut off in mid rant.

“Perhaps I should explain your place in these proceedings Malfoy.” Harry’s quiet voice filled the room. “To you, I am your Lord Black. Do you understand?”

“The Dark Lord will...” his voice choked off as Harry’s magic squeezed tighter.

“As slow to learn as your arrogant waste of flesh of a son aren’t you Lucius? I don’t give a damn about your Dark Lord. I will destroy him in my own good time. My lovely wife is the Lady Black. Call her a ‘girl’ again and I will kill you. Lord Longbottom is my trusted advisor. Forget his title again and I will kill you. Presume to give another order in my presence and I will kill you. Do you understand me now Lucius?”

The pressure on Malfoy lifted slightly. “Yes Lord Black” he choked out. Harry’s magic release him and the head of the house of Malfoy slumped to the ground.

“Cousin Narcissa, how are you this evening?”

Narcissa Black Malfoy was startled at what had just happened to her husband; even the Dark Lord had never so handled Lucius in her presence. The training from her youth took over almost instantly. She curtsied to Harry. "Lord Black, Lady Black. I am well. I thank you for setting aside your valuable time to meet with my husband and myself."

"There is always time for family Cousin Narcissa, what can our Lord do for you tonight?" Daphne asked.

"The purpose of this meeting was so that my Husband could speak with Lord Black."

"Lucius is going to offer an alliance with the Half-blood Tom Riddle against Dumbledore. Quite the plan Lucius, did you think it up all by your self?" Harry asked sarcasm dripping off his voice. "An alliance with one lying backstabbing bastard to go against another lying backstabbing bastard. What a master plan." Harry shook his head. "Not interested in Lucius or his machinations. I'm interested in you Cousin Narcissa. We've met three, perhaps four times. I've never seen you smile. Your sister Andromeda smiles, your sister Bellatrix smiles insanely, but she smiles, why don't you? Has life with Lucius drawn all the joy from you?"

Narcissa blinked. She hadn't been expecting this. "One deals with life the best one can Lord Black."

"In deed one does Cousin Narcissa. I notice that you haven't answered my question. Are you happy?"

Narcissa's eyes swept from Harry to Daphne, then on to Neville. What was he asking? "No My Lord, I am not. I find this war to be stressful. Never knowing who will die next."

“Are you happy with your marriage Cousin Narcissa?”

“What are my options My Lord? As you know my status is limited to that of my husband.”

“Your branch of the family Black misses you Narcissa. I know that you and your son do not carry the mark of the half-blood Riddle. Unlike your husband you are not branded like farm animals, as such I am more than willing to bring the pair of you back into the family, dissolving your marriage, reclaiming your dowry to use for establishing yourself independent of any man. Especially one who would sacrifice you and your son to his mad lord.”

Narcissa’s eyes flicked from Harry’s face to that of her husband. Lucius’s face was contorted in fury. Was it possible, was this child honestly making an offer? “And what of my son, Lord Black?”

“Should he be willing to swear allegiance to the house of Black, he will become one of my heirs and take the name of Black. He would never be in line to take over as the head of the family, that will pass to the first son of my wife, but Draco will have a family that will support him.”

“Why would you do this? You and Draco hate each other.”

“We do Cousin Narcissa. Much of what Draco believes disgusts me. But that doesn’t mean I want him dead. As I told Lucius, I am going to destroy Tom Riddle. There will be fall out, and those who follow Riddle will not be able to claim Imperius this time.”

Narcissa thought for a second. "I accept your offer My Lord."

"Excellent." He turned to Lucius. "Lucius Malfoy, I judge that you have violated the terms of your marriage contract by swearing allegiance to Tom Riddle in direct conflict to the oath you took to the house of Black. Your marriage to Narcissa Black is hereby annulled. Gringotts will be retrieving the Dowry of Narcissa Black, which will sadly bankrupt the minor house of Malfoy. Your son Draco will be offered the option of joining the house of Black or remain with you as a bastard of the minor house of Malfoy. You are dismissed. Return to your master; tell him his offer of an alliance is rejected. Tell him also that his days are numbered."

In a fit of rage, Lucius pulled his snake headed wand from his cane and pointed it at Harry with a spell on his lips. Harry was about to crush the life from him when he was startled by a cry of 'Reducto!' and Lucius' head disappeared into a bloody mist.

All eyes in the room fell to Narcissa Black, whose wand was still pointing at her former husband. "No one threatens Lord Black."

"Thank you Cousin Narcissa. Go to your Sister Andromeda, tell her what has happened tonight, ask her to help you move to one of the unplottable Black properties. Until the war is over, you will be a target. It will not be long Cousin, I promise you this."

“Thank you Lord Black. Please win this war, so much depends on it. I will send my son a message to swear his loyalty to you.”

···---ooo000ooo---...

Neville shook Harry's hand at the entrance to the castle, and taking the waiting Hannah by the hand strolled away for some quiet time.

“I hope Hermione is alright.”

“I asked Tracy to look in on her” Daphne admitted.

“You did? I asked Luna to do that.”

“Davis and Lovegood, together again for the first time. Now that's a combination that would frighten the strongest man.” They started up the stairs to the floor their apartments were on. “Harry, I think Hermione's terrified that you will reject her since the rape. I think you should go to her tonight, just for the physical contact. I don't mean that you should insist on sex, but just be in the bed with her, holding her. If you hold her like you hold me, there is no way she won't feel loved.”

“Are you sure? I don't want to force myself on her.”

“Try. I know I miss you when you're not there.

···---ooo000ooo---...

When they got to their apartments the lights were dimmed and the common room was empty. Daphne pulled him into a deep kiss.

She melted into him. "Damn it. I hate being noble. Go to her. You love her, she loves you. She's frightened right now. Just love her. Tomorrow your ass is mine."

She kissed him again and left for her room. Harry went to his room and dressed for bed. He then slipped into Hermione's room and into her bed. He lay quietly for a few moments listening to her quiet snore. Then she rolled over to him. She was startled to find him there, but recognized him from his smell.

"Hey."

"Hey yourself. Feeling better?"

"A bit. Thank you for getting Luna to come in for me."

"Luna's good people." She cuddled into him. Daphne was right. He didn't know why that surprised him in the slightest, she usually was. "Are we ok?"

"Always." She murmured. "Sleepy. Feeling sorry for myself is tiring."

"You're sure you're ok?"

"Yeah." She kissed his chest. "Love you"

...---ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Sixteen – Trial by Fire

Arthur returned from the floo. “Lucius Malfoy is dead.”

“Good.” Fred said.

“Why do we care?” George asked.

“He was killed during a meeting with Harry. Kingsley didn’t have the details yet, but he’s looking into it. There was evidently a Black Family meeting, and Malfoy made an aggressive move.”

“Still good.” Fred repeated.

“And why do we care?” George repeated.

“I know I don’t care.” Fred affirmed.

“Harry killed a man who has wronged him far less than our family.” Their father explained.

“If Harry was going to kill Ron or Ginny, they would have been dead before the Aurors could have gotten them out of the castle.” George pointed out. “Dad, seriously, Harry isn’t going to kill Ron or Ginny unless he finds either of them ever looking at Hermione again.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Lucius Malfoy was dead. That news startled the man once known as Tom Riddle. Somehow he had always expected that his would be the hand that took the arrogant purebloods life. Who knew Potter had it in him?

Still, to kill the emissary of the Dark Lord, that could not be ignored. The boy would have to be punished. Of course he was already marked for death. Unfortunately he was also well protected. His friends, less so. The old fool's influence was waning. The Nott boy reported that a Hogsmeade weekend was coming up. Riddle's reptilian face contorted into an approximation of a smile.

"Bellatrix!"

"My Lord?"

"It has come to my attention that Hogwarts will be having a Hogsmeade Weekend starting tomorrow."

"Children to play with? Thank you My Lord."

"It seems to me you have unfinished business with the Longbottom family, do you not?"

"Oh My Lord!" the psychotic pureblood was in an almost orgasmic state. Was her insanity getting worse?

"Take a dozen of my Death Eaters with you. Kill all the children you find."

"Yes My Lord."

The woman was insane, but an effective tool. Perhaps an accident should be arranged to ensure she never directed her insanity at him.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Hermione lay in her bed luxuriating in Harry's presence. It would be time to be up soon. Her alarm clock was rebelliously Muggle, a clock work clock (a small part of her found needing to define a clock as being 'clock work' to be amusing) with radium painted hands showed that the time was 5am. Harry's arm was around her, his hand holding her stomach, right where the child would be if it was growing inside of her.

Luna said there was no child. Luna knew things. She couldn't explain why or how she knew these things but she knew things. Luna said there was no child.

Why wasn't she happier about that? Maybe it would take hearing the news directly from Madam Pomfrey. Did some part of her want the baby? She didn't think so, but... It was as if something was suddenly missing. Had she been preparing for bad news?

She thought back to the previous evening. As Luna was leaving, Tracy Davis stopped by. She hadn't said a word, just entered the common room as Luna was leaving it. She had sat on the sofa on the far side from where Hermione was.

The Grey Slytherin had just sat staring at her for most of 20 minutes. Then she spoke "So. I would have thought Lovegood would cheer you up. Are you just weirded out having me here?"

"No, I appreciate the company."

“No you don’t Granger. You don’t like me. You never have. That’s fine, I’ve never liked you. If not for you I’d be first in the class. Daphne likes you though. No, that’s a lie. Daphne loves you.”

“It’s the bonding. I love Harry, she needed Harry. We needed to get along.”

“You’re wrong Granger. It’s not the bonding. The bonding made you understand and like her and she understands and likes you. Now she loves you. It’s Potter’s magic that’s changed Daphne. You know what you’ve got here. Don’t let the Weasley’s take it away from you.”

“Every time I close my eyes I see Ron on top of me. I feel him inside of me. Harry deserves a better wife than I can be.”

“Merlin you’re an idiot. How the hell are you beating me in every damned class? Harry Potter loves you. He chose you. His stupid Gryffindor nobility tied him to Daphne, and because of that Daphne is going to change the world. You have his name, his fortune and his power. More important than that, you have his soul. Harry doesn’t give a damn what Weasley did to you beyond that he hurt you. You could screw every single guy in this school and as long as he knew it was your idea, Harry would take you to his bed without blinking an eye. Do you understand what you’ve got?”

“I know he loves me. I don’t understand why, but I know he does.”

She felt him spoon closer to her, his left hand moving down to move his finger tips in slow circles over her pubic hair. He loved to do that; she had been surprised when she

discovered she loved it when he did it. He called them her 'curlies'. His starting to do this in his sleep was somehow more endearing than anything else he could do. Part of her wanted to respond to him, but the part that knew she was dirty wouldn't let her.

"Listen Granger." Tracey had continued. "You have the support of someone I respect over everyone else on this pathetic planet. If Daphne sees you as an equal they you must be as amazing as she is. You have the love of Harry Bloody Potter. I've been in the presence of the disgusting caricature that calls its self a Dark Lord, Harry radiates more power than that abomination ever dreamed about. He is going to kill Voldemort, your husband is going to be the savior of the world, and will be in a position to change this world to make things better, with you telling him what better is. You have your parents who both love and support you and who would never trade your happiness for some perceived political advantage. Yes what happened to you was horrible. But you are strong. You will get through this because of who you are and who you have to help you."

"What makes you think I'm so bloody strong?"

"You're beating me and I'm strong. You aren't the first woman this has happened to. Malfoy got to me third year. His two idiots held me down while he used me. Then they took turns. My parents were overjoyed. 'Well done Tracey' they said. 'Coming to the attention of the Malfoys, we can only profit from this alliance.' they said. Not a single boy in Slytherin would help. Only Daphne would hold me while I cried. They've used me dozens of times since." Hermione looked up horrified. There were tears in the dark haired girl's eyes. "I survived it. So can you."

Hermione remembered pulling the other girl into her arms, whispering "Never again." Tracey was right. She was strong. She wasn't ready for more intimacy that what she was sharing with Harry now, but she would be.

··---ooo000ooo---...

Ginny Weasley sat on the cot in the cell.

Where had it all gone wrong? How had Luna known? Why had she interfered? Harry and his Slytherin slut found her idiot brother and that stupid mudblood in the act, but what did he do? Did he abandon Hermione and come to her? No. He had ignored her totally and just gone to Hermione. He had passed her unconscious body in the halls on the way to the Hospital wing. Molly had told her that Harry had threatened her parents, that Harry said he was going to kill her and Ron if he ever saw either of them again...

Molly was wrong, she must have misunderstood. Harry loved her. When he was done with Hermione and that Slytherin slut he would come back to her. They were together for ten months. She dreamed his kisses. This was all a mistake. Harry would fix this. Harry would save her. As soon as he knew that Hermione the Whore was carrying Ron's baby, Harry would come for her.

Harry always saved her. He fought a basilisk for her. He killed Riddle's echo to save her. When she fell in the Ministry, Harry held her crying... Didn't he? It was hard to remember.

A tray slid through the slot at the base of the door. They weren't fooling her. She knew what they were doing. There

were potions in the food. They wanted to control her. They wanted to make Harry forget her.

Harry would never forget her.

...---ooo000ooo---...

“You’re not pregnant.”

“You’re sure?” Hermione looked into the Healer’s eyes, almost begging her to confirm.

“Very sure Ms. Granger. Poppy Pomfrey had given this news more times than she could remember. All too often the news was just the opposite. The young woman’s reaction to the news was all too normal. Tears. Having her husband there was not normal, but welcome.

Harry pulled her into his arms, and held her as she wept. Somehow, someday he would make all this up to her.

Twenty minutes later, with a freshly washed face, and eyes that were no longer quite so red, Hermione walked with Harry back to their apartments.

“If you’d like, we could go to Hogsmeade today. You know, get some fresh air, and stretch our legs, like that.”

“No.” she shook her head. “I’d like another day to get myself together. You go, take Daphne, and have fun. Both of you have been hovering over me long enough.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes. Get me something.”

“What would you like?”

She smiled. His heart lifted at the sight of her dimples once again. “Surprise me.

···---ooo000ooo---...

Neville reached up to assist Hannah down from the carriage.

“So, Milady, where to? Madam Puddifoot’s?”

“Merlin no! That place is pathetically soppy. Let’s hit Honeydukes then the Three Broomsticks for some drinks. Find me a dark booth in the back and who knows how lucky you might get.”

“You know Hannah; you might just be the best girlfriend, ever.”

···---ooo000ooo---...

Harry and Daphne had taken advantage of the Hogsmeade weekend to go to London looking for something to cheer Hermione up. Harry had insisted that a book would be the perfect gift; Daphne disagreed and wanted to get some comfortable sleepwear, insisting that no woman ever had enough.

They of course compromised and did it Daphne’s way. Harry snuck a pair of Muggle paperback novels written by authors whose work Hermione followed.

Following the shopping Harry escorted Daphne to an Indian restaurant to add to her education in Muggle cuisine. Daphne took to curry with gusto, ordering a second plate when she finished. Harry found her joy at the food to be infectious. He made sure to get a 'to go' plate for Hermione, knowing as he did that hell hath no fury like Hermione denied food she liked.

··---ooo000ooo---...

Neville Longbottom was on his hands and knees panting. The Cruciatus Curse had his throat raw from the screaming. If he was to die at the hands of this unspeakable bitch, at least he knew that Hannah had gotten the others away. His magic was enough that he would distract and delay the bastards. Just a few more days and he would have...

"Oh, look what we found ickle Neville." Bellatrix's insane voice cut through the pain to get his attention.

He looked up from the dirt, and saw Hannah struggling in the arms of one of the masked bastards. His vision went red, anger like he had never known spiked through his soul.

"Is she your ickle girlfriend ickle Nevipoo? Has she spread her legs for you Nevipoo? Maybe she would be kind enough to entertain the gentlemen with me. Would you like to see that Nevipoo? How many do you think she could take before she starts begging you to kill her?"

Rage became his entire world. He lunged toward the woman.

"Crucio!"

The pain came again; the rage took the pain, and shredded it. His left hand found her throat lifted her from the ground, pinning her against the wall and began to squeeze, his right covered hers, and breaking her fingers and the wand she held.

“Accio Wand!” he was rewarded by the cherry and unicorn hair wand slapping into his hand. “Reducto!”

The Death Eater holding Hannah suddenly found it difficult to breath with a 4 inch hole blown completely through his chest.

“Neville!” Hannah rushed to him. Neville placed himself between the remaining Death Eaters and the woman he loved.

····ooo000ooo····...

Harry and Daphne apparated back to Hogsmeade and found portions of the town in flames.

Harry grabbed the arm of a man running past. “What the hell happened here?”

“Death Eater attack. Bellatrix LeStrange was leading them. They attacked students from Hogwarts!” said the man as he continued to where ever he was going. Harry and Daphne exchange a look and without saying a word they both pulled their wands and started to run toward the castle.

Outside the Three Broomsticks, they found Kingsley Shacklebolt standing over twelve shrouded bodies, directing the actions of a team of Aurors.

“Potter! Come here.”

The pair approached the tall man. “What happened?” Harry asked.

“We were wondering where you were. It’s not like you to miss these things, we were afraid that you had been captured.” The older man checked his notes. “Voldemort sent an assault team with the express mission of killing students. Bellatrix LeStrange was in charge. That’s her there.” He kicked one of the shrouded bodies. “When they apparated in, the first people they found were Neville Longbottom and his girlfriend. You know how the Bitch fixated on the Longbottoms, she attacked the boy, who managed to keep the bastards focused on him so that his girlfriend could get everyone out of the way. The kid lasted long enough that she actually managed to get the students evacuated. Then she went back for him. She was caught of course. Bellatrix threatened Miss Abbott, and Longbottom went completely insane. He killed LeStrange with his bare hands, and killed all but one of the Death Eaters with her. The survivor doesn’t have a mark on him, but he’s singing his head off, telling us everything he knows. He says that Longbottom told him that if he leaves out a single detail, Longbottom will do things to him that the Dark Lord never thought of in his worst nightmares.”

“Is Neville ok?”

“No, Harry he isn’t. Heavy Cruciatus exposure. He’s in the Hospital Wing. Poppy said he was operating on pure adrenalin and rage.”

····ooo000ooo---

Harry and Daphne arrived back at their apartments and Harry was immediately attacked by a bushy haired blur in her pyjamas.

“Where the hell have you been?” she screamed at him while clinging to him. “I’ve been so worried, I thought you were hurt or captured, or dead in an alley somewhere, don’t you ever do that to me again!”

“Hermione.” Daphne stroked her hair. “We were in London. We found out about the attacks when we got back.”

“We didn’t mean to worry you Hermione.”

“You went to London? Why?”

“We thought we’d get you something to cheer you up.” Daphne handed her the bag from Harrods

“You got me presents? Thank you. “

“And food!” Harry offered the to-go plate, complete with warming charms.

She opened the bag, and peeked inside. “You got me curry?” She pulled the Styrofoam containers from a bag. “Curry is good. Thank you.” She looked up at Harry. “You should go see Neville.”

“I’ll see him later. I worried you today, you come first.”

“Go see him now. I want to talk to Daphne. Go away.”

···---ooo000ooo---...

Harry got to the Hospital wing and found Hannah huddled in on a chair next to the only occupied bed, with Susan Bones in attendance. Hannah rose from her chair and pulled Harry into a hug.

“Thank god, we were worried that you had been captured.”

“Daphne and I were in London looking for something for Hermione. How’s Neville?”

“Neville is an idiot.” The man in question answered from his bed. His entire body shaking from the tremors associated with heavy exposure to the Cruciatus Curse. “I should have run, but I thought I could delay them.”

“You did delay the bastards Nev. The Aurors are in awe of you. Not a single student got hurt, other than you. The Death Eater you let live is singing like a canary. I may be ‘The Boy Who Lived’, but the Aurors are calling you ‘The Man Who Kicked Ass’.

“Gran’s going to kill me.”

“I don’t know mate. You’ve always said that she compares you to your dad. After today, she might have to start comparing your dad to you.” Harry smiled at his bedridden friend. “Has anyone called her yet? I could do that if you’d like.”

“Professor McGonagall has gone to contact her.”

“Madam Pomfrey’s giving us the Evil eye. You lot better leave.” Hannah said. “I’m staying with Neville to meet his Grandmother.”

Harry nodded. “You take care mate. If you need anything, let me know.”

“Thanks Harry.” Neville lay back on the bed, as Harry and Susan left the wing.

“Now then Mr. Longbottom.” Hannah leaned over and kissed him. “When you get out of here, you are going to get so lucky.”

“Hannah, I didn’t do anything.”

“Didn’t do anything he says. You fought through a Cruciatus Curse. No one’s ever done anything like that. You stood up while she was casting it on you and fought her. Then you protected me. If you weren’t hurt, I’d be having my way with you right now Neville.”

The door to the Infirmary burst open and Augusta Longbottom entered. Neville bit back the surprise. This was the first time he had ever seen his Gran away from the family home without her hand bag and without her Vulture Hat. Had his being hurt flustered her that much?

“Neville! How are you?”

“I’m ok Gran. Madam Pomfrey’s taking good care of me.” Behind Augusta another figure entered the room “Great Uncle Algie? Thank you for coming.”

“ I was visiting your Gran when we heard of your adventures Neville. Well done Lad. Ye showed the guts of a Croaker ye did.”

“I just did what I had to do. LeStrange won't be bothering anyone else.” It was then he remembered what he needed to do. “Gran, Great Uncle Algie, this is Hannah Abbott...” his mouth suddenly went dry. “My girlfriend. Hannah, My Grand Mother Augusta Longbottom and my Great Uncle Algernon Croaker.”

Pleasantries were exchanged. Gentle conversation went on for another quarter hour before the day caught up with Neville and he drifted off to sleep. Madam Pomfrey then came to check on her patient, and ushered them all from the ward.

“Neville seems quite taken with you Miss Abbott.”

“And I love him Lady Longbottom. He fought and killed for me today, I could never walk away from a man like that.” A subtle warning to the older woman.

“As I thought. Might this be a good time to approach your parents about beginning negotiations?”

Hannah hadn't been expecting that. Somehow she had expected the Aristocratic Lady Longbottom to forbid her from seeing Neville again. “That might be wise. My family are merchants Lady Longbottom...”

“The house of Longbottom hasn't demanded dowries for more than two centuries Miss Abbott. If they had, then a young merchant's daughter named Augusta Croaker might

never have joined the family.” The older woman smiled. “Don’t look so startled Miss Abbott, in a mere 60 years, you’ll be able to pull off the Pureblood Matron act as well as I do.” Augusta placed a hand on the young woman’s shoulder. “I’ve treated Neville badly, constantly comparing him to his father, but you’ve made him happy. Please continue. He deserves it.”

····ooo000ooo····

Daphne watched Harry leave for the Hospital Wing before turning to Hermione.

“What did you need to talk about?”

“Tracey and Draco, and what we’re going to do about it.”

“She told you?”

“Not the details, but yes. She told me. I was so deep into feeling sorry for myself she told me what had happened to her so that I would know I could get through it because she did.”

“What did you want to do? Tracey’s always just wanted to keep it quiet.”

“Things have changed Daphne. To start with, you own Draco now, don’t you?”

Daphne’s eyes widened with the realization that Hermione was right.

“The first thing we need to do is get Tracey the hell out of the Slytherin dorms. Then we find out who else is being abused in this castle.”

“And then?” Daphne asked. She never expected such a... Slytherin response from Hermione Granger. She was going to deal with her pain through revenge and inflicting pain on those who deserved it.

“And then we find out who has been protecting the rapists and abusers in this castle, this so called ‘safest place’. And we destroy them.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Seventeen – The Tides of Retribution

Another day of attempting to teach dunderheads. Another day wasted. Severus Snape, his robes billowing behind him, strode into his office, and stopped in open mouthed amazement. Harry Potter was sitting with his feet upon Snape's personal desk thumbing through a priceless antique potions book like it was a textbook.

"What the hell do you think you are doing in my office Potter?"

"Good afternoon Snivelous." The dark haired boy said looking up from the book. "I'm here to find something out. Your answer doesn't really matter; I'm just feeding my own personal curiosity. Do you know what goes on in your house?"

"Get out of my office Potter. I'll have you expelled for this."

"Yes, yes," Harry made the rolling 'speed it up' sign with his left hand. "Every year, you'll have me expelled. Yet somehow, I'm still here. This year, the Headmaster might even let you do it. The problem is of course, I don't care. The only thing expulsion will do is give me more time to destroy your masters, both of them. Sit down Snivelous."

The potions master felt the force surround him, then force him into the chair in front of the desk.

"I suppose I should be thanking you. If you ran a house with any measure of civilized behavior, then Hermione might still be trying to deal with what happened to her, but you and your neglect has given her a cause to focus on. Are you

aware that you had at least one young woman under your care repeatedly raped over the last five years?"

"That's what women are for Potter. Men want them. Men use them. Which one of the wenches complained?"

"Which one? Wonderful. You're wrong Snivelous, that's not what women are for. It was your responsibility to protect them." Harry shook his head. "You know, if I killed you now, I'd be doing you a favor. My wives know about your house's activities and they are going to destroy your happy little band of rapists. If you've touched a single girl yourself, I would suggest you start running now. It won't do you any good, but the exercise couldn't hurt."

"You dare threaten me Potter?"

"Snivelous, doesn't the fact I can control your body without a wand or an imperius worry you in the slightest? I'm not threatening you. I'm telling you what is going to happen. You're a bully and a coward, but I never really thought you were stupid. Open your eyes, both of your masters will be gone inside the year. You've no one to hide behind any longer.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Draco slowly regained consciousness. What had happened? He had been leaving the Great Hall following dinner, contemplating the death of his father, the disillusion of his parent's marriage, and his mother's letter telling him to approach Potter hat in hand to beg his protection, then nothing.

“Waking up are we?”

Draco's attention focused on the bushy haired woman before him. Her smile was predatory, he found he couldn't move.

“What have you done to me Mudblood?”

The knee that buried its self into his groin belonged to the raven haired beauty standing beside Hermione Granger. Draco's world dissolved into one of red tinged agony. It was only the body bind and sticking charm that kept him upright.

“That was one Draco. Use a word that annoys me again and find out what happens for the second occurrence.” The Blood Traitor said.

“Do you know who I am?” he choked out between gritted teeth.

“Of course we know who you are Draco, a penniless bastard with delusions that what you want and think matter in the slightest.” Hermione said.

“We know you got Mummy's letter telling you to beg Harry for your life Draco. You belong to me.”

“Potter's Lord Black, not you.”

“Draco, my husband is indeed Lord Black. I however am Lady Black, and on these matters he listens to me. I tell him to kill you, you are dead. I tell him to leave you as you are; you will be a poverty stricken bastard with no name for all of your life. I tell him to reward you, and you will have treasure

that would make you late father's fortune pale in insignificance."

"What do you want? Isn't Potter man enough to satisfy you?"

His world went red again, and pain consumed the universe.

"That's two Draco. Harry is more man than you will ever be you arrogant little shit." The raven haired woman lifted his face with a single finger under his chin. "A third mistake means you die Draco. Consider that."

"What we want is pretty simple Draco." Hermione added. "We want to know ever woman you've taken advantage of. We want to know every woman you know was hurt by any of your little playmates. Tell us the truth and you'll live. We might even allow Harry to keep his promise to your mother. Lie to us and your life will become most unpleasant and very very short."

····ooo000ooo····...

Luna sat under her favorite tree. This was a place where people would leave her along. The abuse and bullying in the Ravenclaw dorms hadn't reduced in the slightest, she was still spending an inordinate amount of time tracking down her personal things. She didn't really mind all that much, but it was vexing to be the target of so much hostility, still it wouldn't last forever.

A branch of the huge willow dipped down to lightly caress her cheek. She never understood why so many people with

so frightened by this gentle tree. It was not like the plant was hostile or anything.

Lucius Malfoy was dead, the Malfoy line gone. Neville had taken his heritage in both hands and Bellatrix was dead. Realities swirled about her, she watched as entire universes sheared off the path she was on. Hermione and Daphne were gathering the women abused in the school, and retribution was being planned. Leaving as Tracy Davis was arriving had been the best choice; the reality it created was turning out to be one of the primary paths to happiness for Harry.

It was important that Harry be happy. As she had told Hermione's parents, that was the most important thing. The fact that this path now led to happiness for her was only icing on the rhubarb.

She wondered if Harry or Hermione knew that the Grangers had returned to England.

Hermione was good for Harry. It was good that she read the book Luna had given Harry and understood. There were so many things about Wizarding culture that the Muggle borne and Muggle raised had no clue about. It was fortunate that Hermione was so very intelligent, if somewhat set in her beliefs.

“Luna?”

She looked up. “Justin!” she said brightly. She had been expecting him for a while now.

“Luna, what are you doing there? That bloody plant is dangerous!” Justin Finch-Fletchly had been on a walk around the school grounds when he had spotted the slight blonde. Having received a ‘Dear John’ letter from his girl friend (a concept that had required a 20 minute explanation to Ernie, who still wasn’t clear on just who ‘John’ was) he was feeling a bit sorry for himself. Still a conversation with the pretty Ravenclaw could be a welcome distraction. He had always found Luna to be more than a little odd, but not in a bad way. He would hate to have her get hurt.

“Oh, poo. This tree is the most affectionate plant I have ever encountered.” A minor branch ran through her hair causing her to giggle. “Would you like to sit and enjoy the day Justin?”

Finch-Fletchly swallowed. If he couldn’t find it in himself to accept her invitation because he was frightened by a tree, would he be able to look into a mirror to shave? “That would be nice Luna. Are you sure that your friend will be as accepting of me as he is of you?”

“Of course.” She patted the ground next to her. “Come on, I won’t bite... very hard.” For a moment she felt sorry for all the other Lunas whose paths were not as happy.

...---ooo000ooo---...

“Are you sure?” Amelia Bones looked up from the parchment on her desk.

“Yes. Without a doubt. There isn’t a lot of research on the topic, because no one has been allowed to remain under the effects of vincodiligo for anywhere near that long before.

Both the youngest Weasleys had been taking that potion from October last year until September this year. Dumbledore supplied the potions, and well, you've seen them." Algie Croaker was shaking his head.

Amelia regarded the unmentionable with narrowed eyes. "And why is your department interested in this? Usually attempting to get help from you is like pulling dragon teeth."

"Dumbledore tried this little trick on my grand nephew Neville Longbottom when Potter slipped his leash. It was only luck that had his dosing with *mancipiumdiligo* discovered before it could affect him. We don't know who the controllers were, but as long as they have stopped taking their potions, there shouldn't be any harmful effects."

"So what does this mean for the Weasleys?"

"You've seen them. The both of them are completely totally insane. Both of them convinced that the Potters belong to them. I don't know if anything can be done for them. When Neville told me what had happened, I researched the potions. No one has taken the control potion for more than two months in all the documentation available. And those who took the potion for two months started showing signs of obsession with their thralls. Dumbledore is being negligent with his actions toward his pawns. Something needs to be done."

Amelia Bones nodded. "I understand. Thank you."

Croaker stood and handed her a folder overstuffed with parchment "This is my research. I of course cannot be associated with this. The Unmentionables do not participate

in these things. But Neville is blood; please do what needs to be done.”

He left the office. Amelia stared after him for several moments before turning to her fireplace, and throwing in a pinch of floo powder into the hearth she called out “Arthur Weasley.”

··---ooo000ooo---...

“What do you need?” Tracey had come to the married quarters at Daphne’s requests “Your note said it was important.”

“I wanted to thank you Tracey.” Daphne pulled her oldest friend into a hug. “You pulled Hermione out of her funk.”

“And gave her a windmill to tilt at.” Tracy and Daphne had been exchanging Muggle Idioms since first year. “Seriously, she’s going to be ok?”

“Hermione is worried about you.”

“Stupid Gryffindor.”

Daphne smiled. “Actually, she’s not as bad as that. She pointed out to me that since the Malfoy marriage was annulled, and Lucius is now dead, I own Draco.”

For the first time in memory Daphne saw her friend at a loss for words. She opened and closed her mouth several times. “How did I miss that?”

“You and me both. Of course it hasn’t even been twenty four hours yet. A good plot requires time.”

“True. And I’ve taken that time. I think it’s time to talk with Draco.”

“Already done. Hermione was very imaginative in her interrogation techniques. Draco is not the happiest of people just now. I knew there were other girls being molested, but I had no idea that so many were, nor what Snape was doing. Did he touch you?”

“Just once. His memory charms are crap. It’s foggy but I remember what he did. He has a thing for redheads. I remember he flubbed the transformation on me twice. What’s the plan?”

“Just now, we haven’t decided. What we are doing is isolating the abusers.”

“Daphne, can we do this?”

“Yes. Harry has the power to exact our revenge. He has the motivation. I have the plan, and Hermione has the anger. Daphne, contact every girl you know of who has been taken against her will, there will be a meeting in the Room of Requirements tomorrow after dinner.”

····ooo000ooo---

Arthur Weasley had convened another Family meeting around the kitchen table. His five eldest sons sat around the table each inwardly reflective. Even the twins were quiet and keeping to themselves.

“I’ve received some disturbing news.”

“What have Potter and his whores done now?” Molly spat.

“Be silent Molly. It seems that both Ron and Ginny are suffering from over exposure to the Control potion they were using to control Harry and Hermione.”

“What do you mean Dad?”

“Amelia Bones called me today Bill. They were under constant dosing of the Control potion for almost a year. According to Amelia the maximum safe exposure is eight weeks. The constant exposure to the potion has them both in a delusional state that their thralls, in this case Harry and Hermione, belong to them, and in fact are in love with them. They are both quite insane. They have been transferred from the Ministry Holding cells to a long term care ward at St. Mungos.”

“They’re lying! Dumbledore would never have allow...”

“SHUT UP MOLLY. I know you were involved. I know you knew what they were doing. This is your fault. Your actions have cost two of our children their very minds. The Mind Healers have no idea if they can ever recover from what you allowed to happen to them. There is going to be an investigation, Dumbledore is going to be tried for this, and if you are deemed to be criminally liable for this, I swear to god that I will eject you from the family.”

...---ooo000ooo---...

“Well, you impressed my Gran” Neville said as Hannah led him into the Hufflepuff Head Girl’s suite. “She kept going on about you. I think she might like you better than she likes me.”

“We came to an understanding. But I didn’t ask you here to talk about your grandmother.” She took hold of his tie and pulled him into a kiss. “I believe it’s time to take our relationship to the next level.”

Neville picked her up. “I do believe that is a very good idea.”

····ooo000ooo····

“Headmaster, what are you going to do about this?” Dumbledore looked up from his desk. “What are you talking about Severus? What am I going to do about what?” “Potter and his Whores. He actually dared to come to my office to tell me that his women are investigating allegations of sex in the Slytherin house. And he had the gall to tell me that if I had had any of them, he would destroy me.”

“You’ve had students?”

“On occasion. I obliviate them afterwards, no harm done.”

“Severus, you don’t see anything wrong with that?”

“Of course not. It’s not like it hurts them. So a few of the Slytherin men use a few of the women to relieve stress. Where is the problem?”

“Severus if word of this gets out, your life will not be worth a wooden knut. We have to make sure that no one ever finds out.”

“Just deal with Potter and his Whores. That will fix everything. Or at least force Greengrass back into the Slytherin dormitories. Then I can deal with it internally.”

····ooo000ooo---

The Hogwarts staff room was as quiet as Minerva could remember it. If she hadn't seen most of the rest of the staff sitting there staring at her, she could have imagined being alone in the room.

“I assume you've heard the rumors?”

“In deed Min. I am having trouble believing it, but considering the source...” Filius Flitwick was as angry. “This is a reflection on us all.” This from a man who regularly demonstrated to the occasional student (usually but not always, Slytherin) not to mistake stature for power was furious.

“I've treated so many of the Slytherin girls over the years; I'd always assumed that their injuries were from consensual activities. I should have...”

“We all should have Poppy. I'm afraid we allowed that house's reputation to cloud our judgment and expectations toward them.”

“That includes those of us from that house.” Aurora Sinestra added. “It wasn't like that in my day. But there are other rumors. Those that suggest Severus...”

Flitwick grimaced. "If that one turns out to be true, he and I will dance. The Aurors can have what I leave."

"Don't be absurd Filius. As Deputy Headmistress, that privilege is mine."

It was Pomona Sprout who asked the question that was on all of their minds. "Albus has always defended Severus and protected him from anyone looking into his questionable methods. What if this is true and Albus knew what he was doing?"

Silence once again filled the staff room as that question was considered.

...---ooo000ooo---...

"Thank you for coming." Amelia Bones sat back in one of the comfortable chairs that the Three Broomsticks used in their private meeting rooms. She quietly regarded Potter and his two wives. It was just now slowly dawning on her that these three were the same age as her niece Susan. Would Susan be marrying soon? Hopefully she would find a less turbulent match than these Witches. Potter was a good man, but a trouble magnet.

"I was surprised by your note Madam Bones." Hermione... Granger. Amelia reminded herself that in some odd Muggle custom the girl had kept her maiden name. Did she not understand the honor of being a Potter? The girl continued, "Is there a problem with the Weasley case?"

“Yes, a very large problem.” She passed over a folder of documents. Potter glanced at them, his wives poured over them.

“Why are they in St. Mungos?”

“Over exposure to the control potion Lord Potter. It was never intended to be taken for more than a few weeks; they were constantly dosing themselves for most of a year. Their mental states are chaotic and confused. The Mind Healers at St. Mungos tell me they are both delusionally fixated on yourself and Lady Potter, to the point where they are not capable of participating in their own defense.”

“It doesn’t seem that Dumbledore takes very good care of his pawns.” Daphne Black said sadly.

“No, he doesn’t.” Amelia shook her head. “With this situation, the focus of this case has shifted. I am no longer pursuing the rape charges against the Weasleys, they will be under treatment at St. Mungos for quite a while. One of the Healers I spoke with privately suggested that they may never recover sufficiently to be released. I will be pursuing charges against Albus Dumbledore and Molly Weasley for their part in this.”

Hermione Granger looked up from the documents I had provided her. “What do you think your chances are?”

“Dumbledore is slippery, and he has a near impeccable reputation, but I believe he has gone too far this time.”

“Perhaps this will help.” Daphne Black passed her own folder to Amelia.

“Is this serious?” Amelia asked after having read through the first paragraph?

“Yes. We have confirmed 14 girls from Slytherin, in 3rd through 7th year who have been raped by classmates, and who were told to be quiet about it by their head of house. We have found another 4 instances of abuse of girls from other houses, who were threatened to keep them quiet. Five of Slytherins were also abused by Severus Snape and then he attempted to obliviate them. He isn’t very good with his memory charms, most still remember parts of it.” Hermione said.

“These are the pensieve memories we collected from the victims.” Daphne passed over the vials, clearly labeled and sealed. “You’ll forgive us if we don’t wait for the wheels of justice to slowly grind. We have friends who are in danger, we will be protecting them.”

“As long as you stay within the law...”

The meeting went on for another half hour, with the three women discussing the ongoing investigation, each making suggestions that the other two made notes on. When they were all preparing to leave Harry pulled Amelia to the side.

“I would like to arrange to cover the costs of Ron and Ginny’s stay at St. Mungos.”

“I don’t think that would be...”

“Madam Bones, whatever has happened, they were both my friends at one time. I still look at Arthur Weasley like the

father I never had. Please see what you can do for this. I can't do it out in the open without embarrassing the family, but..."

"I understand Mr. Potter. I'll see what I can do. I'll probably get you in contact with a solicitor who deals with this sort of thing."

"Thank you Madam Bones."

...---ooo000ooo---...

"You're trying to pay for their treatment aren't you Harry?"

The trio were once again walking back to the castle. If Dumbledore was going to continue to be an ass about allowing them to use a carriage for these 'non school sponsored events' Harry was considering buying a carriage of his own. Rules more than a century old allowed for that. "Yes I am. I hate what they've done, but I can't help but wonder just what Dumbledore did to convince them to do this. Ron was a jealous idiot, but he would never have thought to use a potion."

"Ginny would have. She tried to brew one our fifth year. She told me about it and I destroyed it. She was angry with me for weeks after that."

"Wonderful, we didn't have enough crap going on that year with Umbitch, and she wants to bring a love potion into the mix. Still, she was a friend. Her family has been very good to me. Hell, I'll endow St. Mungos with a new wing so that the gift can go further than the Weasleys. I think it's the right thing to do."

“Someday doing the right thing is going to get you killed Harry.” Daphne pouted “You’ve still got to give me five or six children first.”

“Five or six? I thought your goal was four.”

“That was before I found out how much I enjoyed the practice sessions involved in making one. What about you Hermione? How many Potters will we be expecting?”

“I have no idea. I was thinking we would wait until I was established in my career before starting a family.” She dimpled “You’re right though, the practice sessions are fun.”

“If you two can take a break from discussing our sex lives, I want you both to be careful. There are going to be people who aren’t happy with your investigations. I would prefer that neither of you don’t go out alone. You’ve got most classes together; I’ll be where ever you need me. I don’t want anything to happen to either of you”

“We’ll be careful Harry.” Hermione said demurely.

“And I think that we might have more support than you might think.” Daphne added. There are a lot of angry witches who always thought that they were the only ones, and who didn’t think anyone would believe them.”

“I believe that they only real answer is to eliminate the House system.” Harry said. “Or at least the sorting by personality. If we were sorted randomly, so that a single group of personality traits didn’t define an entire house...”

“So in your infinite wisdom, you feel you know better than a thousand years of tradition?” They had reached the castle, from the darkness stepped their Headmaster.

“A tradition that brings out the worst in entire groups? You bet Headmaster.”

“You can just stop making any plans in that direction Mr. Potter, you will not succeed. I wish to speak to your wives.”

“Go right ahead Headmaster.”

“Privately Mr. Potter.”

“No. Privacy is something that you routinely ignore and abuse Headmaster. You’ll have to forgive me if I say I don’t trust you any further than I can throw this castle.”

The old man almost shuddered in his anger. “Very well then. Miss Granger, Mrs. Black. I must insist that you stop this absurd ‘investigation’ of yours. All you are doing is sully the reputations of fine young men.”

“Why doesn’t it surprise me that you would defend rapists Headmaster?”

“Miss Granger...”

“Our investigation will continue Headmaster.” Daphne cut him off. “Those hiding behind your robes will find themselves shown to the world for the cowards they are.”

“Mrs. Black. As long as I am Headmaster, the unfounded accusations you are making will never see the light of day.”

“Then it shouldn’t be that long until everyone knows, should it?”

···---ooo000ooo---...

Chapter Eighteen – The Challenge of a Lifetime

Hermione looked toward the door to Harry's bedchamber. He had retired an hour ago, while she had continued working on her Arithmancy project.

"How many times are you going to look longingly at his door?" Daphne asked smiling. "I've got an excuse with his magic still enforcing the contract compulsion, what about you?"

"Is that really still affecting you?"

"No, I just love him like you do, but I'll claim the excuse to tease him." The Dark haired woman stretched. "Falling in love with the man wasn't part of the plan, but it will make the rest of the plan so much more enjoyable. Do you want him?"

"Yes" she whispered. "For a while I never thought I'd want sex again, but I do."

"It's been almost a month Hermione. I don't know if I could wait that long, the nights he spends with you, I have the most amazing dreams." Daphne laughed. "Listen to me, what have you Gryffindors done to me?"

"Helped you learn to be happy?"

"You have. I share the man I love with the sister I always wanted, but never had. I know what I told you when we were discussing the contract, but I never expected to like you. I expected to nag Harry into setting up separate households in different houses, or if we had an estate, in separate wings of the manor. Now I can't imagine not having you in my life. I

don't like the nights he's with you, but I understand them. Since neither of us are the type to want the three of us in bed together, we will share him as we have been."

"If you and Harry wanted it, I would join you in your bed." Hermione said quietly, unable to meet the eye of her sister wife.

"And if you and Harry wanted, so would I." Daphne admitted. "But you don't want me there, I don't want you, and Harry would never ask no matter how much he wants it. You've seen his fantasies, just as I have. He would love it, but he won't ask."

"Merlin, but he is a perv isn't he?" Hermione found herself laughing. "That fractured psyche of his, can that even be normal?"

"I don't know which part of him I like best, the little perv with the orgy ideas or the little realist critiquing the technique in play. It's probably the result of his loving family." Daphne sobered. "When all this is over, I'm going to visit the Dursleys, and thank them for their kindness."

"Let me know when, I'll clear my calendar and join you."

Daphne stood, pulled Hermione to her feet and hugged the bushy haired witch. "Go to him."

"But it's your night."

"I know that, but tonight you need him worse than I do, or at least you want him more. Go on, before I come to my senses."

“You’re sure?”

“Yes, go on. You still owe me a six hour session with him to make me jealous.”

Hermione smiled and returned the hug.

····ooo000ooo---

Amelia Bones had carefully chosen the Aurors who accompanied her on this arrest. Each was the parent of a daughter, though none of them were related in any way to the alleged victims in this case, nor were they related to the alleged perpetrators. It was a balancing act that she was quite used to. In the small insulated Wizarding World of Britain, having to know who was related to who was a cost of doing business. Beyond family ties, she also had to worry about the loyalty that Albus Dumbledore garnered from his former students.

She stood before the fifteen Aurors in one of her briefing rooms. Photographs of the seven suspects were posted on the wall behind her, along with a layout of the school.

“Good morning Boys and Girls. This is a nasty one, and we’re doing it by the numbers. In a perfect world this would be a simple presentation of an arrest warrant and suspect pickup, but given whom the suspects are, and the money behind some of these families, nothing about this will be simple.” She held them in her trademark glare, the monocle in her left eye magnifying that eye in a most intimidating way. “It will not be simple, but we will be perfect. There will be no mistakes to ruin any of these arrests.”

She directed the Auror's attention to the photos behind her.

"The first suspect is Draco Noname." She indicated the photo of a young blond man. "Slytherin. Formerly scion of the Malfoy family, his parent's marriage was dissolved over a honor dispute. He is reported to be a feeble dueler, but more than capable of a cheap shot in your back."

"Next is Gregory Goyle." She indicated the hulking man child. "Slytherin. Another feeble dueler, but reportedly knows a few devastating hexes."

"Vincent Crabbe. Slytherin, supposed to be pathetically stupid, but physically violent. Watch yourself with this one, those that become violent surprise the best of the Auror corps. Ask Moody how he lost his eye sometime. Get a couple dozen drinks in him first." Laughter filled the room.

"Theodore Nott. Slytherin. Nott is a first class dueler. Getting into a fight with him isn't going to impress me. If this one pulls his wand, drop him. Right then, right there."

"Kingston Harper. Slytherin. Supposed to be a decent dueler. Same rules as the rest of them. If he puts up any fight at all, take him down hard."

"Michael Corner. Ravenclaw. Watch yourselves with this one, very smart, very fast with his wand."

"Wayne Hopkins. Hufflepuff. The intelligence on this one is if he's approached by a man he'll surrender without question. If a woman attempts it, he would fight." She shook her head.

“In my day, we didn’t have ‘Puffs with anger issues. Take him down. Ladies, let one of the men do this one.”

Amelia paused over the last photo. “Severus Snape. Potions Master, Head of Slytherin house. The man is supposed to know more about the Dark Arts than almost anyone else alive. A marked Death Eater. Supposedly ‘reformed’.” There was a ripple of disgusted sounds around the room. “He got off without punishment for his crimes during Voldemort’s first fall when Dumbledore intervened on his behalf. Not this time Boys and Girls. This time we take the murdering bastard down, and if Albus Dumbledore himself gets in the way we take him down as well. We have at least four documented cases of his using girls, one as young as twelve. Who know how many current and former students will come forward when the news gets out?

“Any special instructions Boss?” one of the female Aurors asked.

“ Everyone goes home tonight. If they fight, respond appropriately. If they use an unforgiveable, kill them. Watch each other’s backs. Be careful around the children. We go in at noon. All the targets should be in the Great Hall for Lunch. We go in, I serve the warrants to the beloved Headmaster, and you make the arrests. Team leads will decide who makes what arrests. I want at least two sets of eyes on each suspect. Everyone checks their gear, we move in 2 hours.”

The room immediately erupted into that low murmur that spoke of professionalism and purpose. Amelia missed that, and had since she had left the ranks and moved into administration.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Justin lay staring up at the leafy canopy of the trees. It was early October, it should be cold, the trees should have dropped their leaves, but in this bit of the Forbidden Forest, it was warm, the leaves were green, and he lay naked on the grass as an equally naked blonde cuddled into him in her sleep. She had led him by hand to this bit of summer the evening before and they had made love before falling asleep in each other's arms.

How the hell had this happened? Three weeks before, feeling sorry for himself over his girl friend of two years dumping him, he had found Luna sitting beneath the Whomping Willow, she had laughed at his worry that the tree was dangerous, and had invited him to join her.

The two hours he spent with the Ravenclaw were among the most confusing of his life, yet at the same time somehow... he found himself enraptured with her. Her views on life were as alien to him as if she had come off a movie mothership, but she was just so... certain of everything she said and did. Justin envied her more than a little bit for that. Living as he did with one foot in the Wizarding world and the other in the Muggle world didn't really lend its self to certainty.

Luna went on at length about how important it was that they all help Harry Potter. At first blush, Justin felt a tinge of jealousy toward the Gryffindor, he had a pair of beautiful women as wives, and now Luna kept talking about him, but then he realized Luna was talking about what Potter had to do, and why everyone should help him. She actually believe the whole 'chosen one' thing.

This had given Justin pause. Potter was a good bloke, and Justin had never had any issues with him, at least not after that whole snake thing second year, which on reflection was that ass Malfoy's fault in the first place. He had made the mistake of taking divination, what a waste of time that so called class was, but Luna, far smarter than he actually believed that Harry was prophesized to have to face Voldemort.

Justin understood duty. According to Luna, Harry's duty was to the Wizarding world. Justin's duty was to his family. When he finished at Hogwarts he was to go to a summer of preparatory classes to ready himself for university. His family had obligations that he had to assume, though a ready use of magic might make life a little easier. In the face of that, why was he so attracted to this witch?

The days following the afternoon under the willow (which was playful with him, but he wasn't going to chance it without Luna there to influence the plant) somehow, they began to take meals together at the Hufflepuff table. Justin wasn't welcome at the Ravenclaw table, but then Luna explained, she wasn't either. Then they were doing their class work together. Despite being a year behind him Justin quickly discovered that Luna had a better understanding of the subjects than he did. Three days later she was rewarding him for working his way through problems in his assignments with kisses and hugs, which as absurd as it sounded had motivated him to the best grades he had ever gotten in all of his classes.

Luna stirred in his arms. Justin hoped for the best. He had hurt her the night before; she had been a virgin, something he hadn't expected. If she had said something perhaps he could have been gentler. He had held her until her tears

ended, and then they tried again, this time he was frightened she would break, until she was cooing his name over and over into his ear.

“Good morning Justin. Did you sleep well?”

“Yes. I don’t understand why this place is so warm but it was lovely sleeping with you.” He kissed her on her nose, and she giggled. “We’re missing the morning classes though.”

“That’s why we’ve been working ahead.” She giggled again, taking him in her hand with some gentle strokes. “We’ll need to be back at the castle for lunch to see the excitement, but for now, I believe we need to put a little more effort into building the bonds of our relationship.” She nibbled on his ear lobe, then whispered “Last night you made me come with your hands. This morning I want to come with you inside me. Love me Justin.”

He captured her lips with his own, and gently rolled her onto her back. It took only a few seconds for her to be ready for him, taking his erection in her hands and guiding him into herself. As he entered her, she bit his lower lip. Justin found himself wondering just when it was he lost all control of his life to this beautiful witch.

····ooo000ooo····

It was going to be today. Filius Flitwick sat at his desk in his private quarters polishing his wand. Teaching for seventy four years had given him many contacts in the ministry. Amelia Bones’ secretary himself had contacted Filius the

night before at the Three Broomsticks. A few quiet words and then the man was gone.

Seventy four years at this job. Thousands of children had passed through his classroom. Filius was well aware that he was regarded as a 'crazy uncle'. He knew that his classes were popular, even among the Slytherin students who institutionally hated every class not taught by a Slytherin alumnus. He viewed them all as his children. Wizarding culture had denied the possibility of a 1/8th Goblin ever having a permanent relationship with woman, so his students were his family.

And Severus Snape had been abusing his children. The small man's eyes narrowed, the Goblin portion of his blood pulsed in rhythm with the war hammers. No one at this school had ever seen an angry Filius Flitwick. They were about to. He smiled to himself. His next charms class would probably be a bit quieter.

His old dueling cloak was laid out on his bed. He would allow the Aurors to do their jobs. When they failed (and they would fail, because they would dismiss Severus as a mere school teacher.) Filius would avenge the children Severus had wronged. He would wait for the subhuman thing in the Entrance Hall, the quickest way out of the castle from the Great Hall. Severus would do his damage and run, that was his way when he was a boy, and men rarely learn enough of themselves to truly change. A part of his mind wondered if Minerva knew what was coming. She had her own spy network after all.

No, in spite of everything, Minerva still sees Albus as being infallible. She was making excuses to herself an hour after the meeting where they discussed the charges. She knew

that Severus was slime, but she believed in Albus just a little too much.

It was odd how the old habits and rituals came back to him. With a light brush and ink with a few drops of his blood he drew the runes for luck and power onto his right forearm, then took the brush in his right hand and drew the runes for calm and focus on his left. Looking in the mirror he carefully drew the runes for honor and strength on his chest. He then went into his calming rituals.

In the past he had dueled for money and sport. This time it was going to be for the honor of his profession and revenge for all of his 'children' that Severus Snape had wronged.

...---ooo000ooo---...

Luna and Justin entered the Great Hall for the midday meal. He walked her to the Ravenclaw table. She rose on her tiptoes to kiss him, and then she sat down. Justin hesitated for a moment before sitting directly behind her at the Hufflepuff table.

Ernie Macmillan stared at him open mouthed. "You and Lovegood are together? I know you've been studying together, but when did this happen?"

"I have no idea. Three weeks ago I sat down to speak with her, now she's all I can think about."

"You didn't come back to the dorm last night, you missed Herbology this morning. All Night?"

"Yeah. Is it wrong to be this happy?"

“Good on ya’ Mate. I’ve always said you were too straight laced. Maybe you two average each other out.”

····ooo000ooo---

“Everyone just remain seated.” Amelia Bones’ amplified voice rang out in the Great Hall. “That included you Headmaster.” She strode up to the staff table. “I am Amelia Bones, Head of Magical Law Enforcement. We are here to serve several arrest warrants. If I call your name, you will stand and surrender your wand to the Auror who approaches you. Should you fail to do so; things will go badly for you. Pulling a wand on an Auror is a very large mistake.”

“Madam Bones I must protest your actions, this is a school not...”

“Your objections are noted Headmaster. Now shut up before I arrest you for interfering with the performance of my duties.”

“Draco Noname” The blond Slytherin rose. A look of defeat crossed his features. He took his wand in his left hand and passed it handle first to the Auror who approached.

“Gregory Goyle.” Goyle was taken into custody. “Vincent Crabbe” Draco’s other bookend surrendered as well. “Theodore Nott” Nott stood as if to surrender, and then bolted for the doors. The largest of the Aurors took him by the neck and lifted him from the ground, slamming him into the wall.

“As I said failing to follow my instructions will be bad for you. Wayne Hopkins.”

Justin was amazed when Hopkins stood. A ‘Puff? How could a Hufflepuff do anything that would get himself arrested? Hopkins was collected by a pair of Aurors.

“Michael Corner.”

Corner knew what was coming, but he had had time to evaluate the situation. To his left was a male 3rd year. To his right Luna Lovegood. He needed a hostage. He stood, pulling Luna with him, his wand under her chin

“Anyone comes near me, I’ll kill her.”

“There is no where you can go boy.” Amelia Bones was pissed, her perfect op spoiled.

“Leave me alone, I’ll leave her at the edge of the wards.”

At the Gryffindor table Harry was reaching out with his magic to disarm Corner. Facing Amelia Bones, Corner was surprised when a large hand covered his face and he found the back of his head suddenly slamming into the Hufflepuff table. Before the pain in his head abated, an enraged Justin Finch-Fletchley was punching him in the face, once, twice, a third time before Corner was rescued by an Auror.

It was then everyone was surprised by the slamming of the doors to the Great Hall. In the distraction caused by Corner’s taking Luna hostage, Severus Snape had escaped. The Aurors not guarding prisoners bolted for the doors finding them sealed.

Luna took Justin's right hand in hers, turning it over to look at his knuckles. The skin was torn and bruising. Luna reached out and dipped Justin's napkin in a goblet of water, then used it to clean his wounds. She lifted his hand to her lips, and lightly kissed his wounded hand. Her eyes never left his. "You saved me. Thank you."

"I couldn't let you get hurt."

"Thank you Justin."

····ooo000ooo····

Snape sealed the doors behind him and began running toward the doors leading to the grounds at the end of the Entrance Hall, his wand drawn.

"Going somewhere Severus?" The Charms Master stepped from the shadows and placed himself between the fleeing man and the doors that exited the castle.

"Get out of my way Filius, I don't want to hurt you."

"I'm glad to hear that Severus. You aren't leaving. Place your wand on the ground and step away from it. We will allow the Aurors to do their jobs."

Snape unloosed a bone breaking curse in a single smooth fluid motion. His eyes widened when the diminutive man batted it away with a gesture.

"You always thought you were better than you actually are Severus. That was a novice move a century before you were

born.” Filius spun into a flurry of motion unleashing a complex chain of ten curses and hexes. Snape was startled by the barrage, and dodged the first four, before the next four bracketed him forcing him to stay in position for the last two to hit him in his left shoulder. The first curse to hit him was an overpowered cutting curse that severed his left arm at the shoulder, followed almost immediately by a flame curse that cauterized the wound. “On the circuit it’s considered bad form to allow your opponent to die.” He watched as the potions master slumped to the ground falling into shock. “The Aurors will be here in a moment Severus. While we wait you can think about the children you used.” Filius then cast a bone breaker into Snape’s hips. Later that night he would have to do penance chants to absolve himself of the sin of a brutal attack on an unarmed man. Snape’s screams filled the air as the Aurors finally blasted through the door. As the corners of his mouth began to rise, and Filius made a mental note to add an hour to his penance chants for enjoying the pain of a fallen opponent.

····ooo000ooo····...

Chapter Nineteen – Enough

“Feeling better Professor?” Amelia Bones looked across the table at the one armed man. “It’s time for you to tell me what I want to know.”

Severus Snape glared across the table at her. Gone were his usual black robes. He wore a sleeveless orange tunic ensuring that his Dark Mark was displayed for the world to see. It had been an interesting four days for the Potions Master since he had been released from the St. Mungo’s prison ward. Never before had there ever been so many volunteer for the late shift to guard a single prisoner. Amelia actually interviewed each and every one of the volunteers and explained, hypothetically of course, what might happen to any Auror who was found to be abusing a prisoner...

Not that that helped with the general population of the holding facility. It seems that the average prisoner, what her Aurors called “Ordinary Decent Criminals”, had an exceptionally dim view of those bearing the Dark Mark... Snape’s periods in the ‘exercise yard’ had turned out to be interesting.

“I don’t have to speak with you.”

“No, no you don’t. You can sit there pretending to be my superior and go to Azkaban for the rest of your life.”

“Albus Dumbledore will never allow that to happen.”

“Oh yes, he has been beating down my door since your arrest... No, actually I haven’t seen him since that lovely afternoon in the castle, nor has he as much as sent me a

note. I do know he's been in his offices at the Ministry several times since your arrest, but he hasn't lifted a finger to help you."

"He will."

"Unless of course he feels that defending a Death Eater is one thing, and defending a Child molesting rapist is entirely another. You've been a busy little pervert haven't you? When I arrested you it was on charges for raping five different girls, more than twenty have come forward since. The kindest thing I can do for you would be to lock you away for life. If you get off, you will have so very many husbands, fathers, and brothers looking to kill you, slowly."

That news surprised the Death Eater. Amelia buried her smile behind a frown. "Perhaps the reason that Dumbledore cut you loose was your demonstrated stupidity."

"I beg your pardon?"

"You attempted to curse a four time European Dueling champion, one who showed admirable restraint in only wounding you."

"THIS is restraint?" The man asked incredulously gesturing to his shoulder where his arm had once been.

"Indeed. I'm no where near Filius Flitwick's level, and I would have killed you for your presumption boy. He didn't only because he considered it to be 'bad form'." She gave the man a predatory grin. "Besides, Dumbledore will have his own problems soon enough."

The former teacher's brow furrowed. "I don't understand."

"You see, you are going to tell me about everything you have done in the service of that man, from consorting with known terrorists to raping little girls to abusing Lord Longbottom and Lord Potter-Black."

"Why would I do that?"

"The same reason you took that Dark Mark Death Eater. You're a coward, and you are very afraid of what I might do to you."

...--ooo000ooo--...

Tom Riddle was in a rage. He had killed two low level recruits who brought the news. In a matter of days he had lost the core of his inner circle. Malfoy killed by Potter (Potter blamed Narcissa Malfoy, but really), Bellatrix and the LeStrange brothers killed by Neville Longbottom, Snape arrested for molesting children and fostering rape within Slytherin House. Wormtail killed in a fight with another Death Eater over a prisoner of all things. Most of his spy network in Dumbledore's school had been arrested with Snape and by all reports none of them put up the slightest fight.

And still his two remaining spies in Hogwarts reported that if anything the leaders of the light were even more fragmented than ever. Potter and Longbottom allied against Dumbledore, the Ministry against everyone. It was time. It was time to move. The loss of the Malfoy fortune was worrisome, but if he could strike while the Forces of the Light were in disarray...

Dumbledore's pawns were now in the St. Mungo's Long Term facility under the care of mind healers. They were blood traitors, but fixated upon the Potters... Might they be useful? As a distraction, if nothing more? And the Longbottom whelp's parents...

"Yaxley!"

The Death Eater hurried forward to prostrate himself before his master.

"I have a task for you"

...--ooo000ooo--...

In a hidden and very secure room in Longbottom Manor Harry Potter lay out his plan.

"And why are you asking us about this Lord Potter-Black?"

Harry shrugged. "You are the most knowledgeable people I know when it comes to Wizarding Traditions Lady Longbottom. The Goblins tell me that this should work, but they have their own points of view and who knows what their private agenda might be?"

"Your plan has many risks, and quite frankly, I don't recall anything like it ever being attempted before." Algernon Croaker said looking over the documents Harry had provided. "But it should work, assuming that the debt hasn't been discharged. Also, the wording of the Oath is important."

"That is a risk, but none of the records available show that it has been. In fact until very recently there was no

opportunity TO discharge the debt. As far as the Oath goes, I've only got the archival documents to go on. The previous Lord Blacks seemed to have been an officious lot."

"If you meet him with his forces around him, you will still have to contend with his Death Eaters." Amelia Bones said from her seat at the table. "If you can give me warning, I'll have every Auror in the world there."

"We would appreciate them." Daphne Black said. "But if Hermione is right, we may not need them"

" ' We?'" Augusta Longbottom asked. "Your wives will accompany you to war Lord Potter?"

"No." Harry shook his head.

"Yes" Daphne said, giving her husband a death glare.

"You have stumbled upon the first fight of our marriage Lady Longbottom. Our husband believes he gets a vote on the topic." Hermione Granger smiled. "He seems to feel we should be hiding in some safe location waiting to see if we should be fitted for Widow's Weeds." Hermione turned her attention to Harry while still addressing Neville's grandmother. "Rest assured that if any of us fall in this war, the other two will be there so that they are not alone."

"Hannah will be there as well Gran." Neville said, "no matter how much I beg her other wise." He smiled. "I just know enough to quit fighting it."

“I believe I understand. I have always said a witch is the equal to any wizard, no matter how fat headed the men may be.”

“Merlin Augusta, Just tell them about your adventures as in the Valkerie Squadron during the war against Grendlewald and be done with it.” Croaker laughed. “She still has her Leather Jacket she got from some Yank Muggle bomber pilot.”

“I liked the Patch on the jacket.” She sniffed.

“She liked the Yank IN the jacket.”

Neville shuddered. “Way too much information!”

The meeting ended with laughter.

···--ooo000ooo--...

There had been many times since he had received his Hogwarts letter that Justin Finch-Fletchley had doubted his sanity. Most of those involved going out and doing spectacularly stupid things with Ernie MacMillan, but this time...

Justin had invited Luna Lovegood to his family home to meet his family. At some level he worried about doing this, Luna wasn't the kind of girl his younger sister brought home after all, but he needed to do this.

“Good afternoon Mr. Finch-Fletchley” his blond goddess had said shaking Justin's fathers hand with a small curtsy. “I don't believe I've ever met a Stock Broker before.”

Charles Finch-Fletchly smiled “Welcome to our home Miss Lovegood. Justin has never brought one of his female classmates home before.”

“And I’ve never been to a non-magical home before. Perhaps we will both learn something interesting and new this weekend.”

Charles led Luna and Justin from the foyer to the sitting room. “Miss Lovegood, if I might present my wife, Belinda.”

“How do you do Miss Lovegood.”

“Quite well thank you... excuse me, but you look very familiar.”

“Perhaps you’ve seen us in Diagon Alley Luna.”

“No, that’s not it Justin.” Her expression faded as she concentrated on a memory. The young girl was suddenly jumping up and down in excitement. “You’re Belinda Carmichael! You’re Doctor Belinda Carmichael!”

Justin’s mother shot him a look. “Why, yes I am. How did you know?”

“Daddy takes ‘Physics Review’! Your article on repeatability patterns in Lorenz Attractors was just amazing! I couldn’t follow all the math, but... I can’t believe I’ve actually met Belinda Carmichael!”

“None of my children’s friends have ever had the slightest clue what I did. I’m amazed that you do. I didn’t think that wizards and witches cared about physics.”

“ Oh we do, believe me. Wizarding Astronomers and Arithmancers live and die by the advances in Muggle science and technology. I plan on attending university upon leaving Hogwarts to study maths and physics.”

“You do? To what end?”

“I want to study magic. We’ve been using it forever, but we still don’t know what it is. I think that if precisely what magic is can be isolated, then maybe it could be used by everyone. Imagine, everyone in the world with magic.”

Justin stood back with his father and the two men shared a smile as the women in their lives discussed mathematics. Justin shook his head. What had he been worried about?

····ooo000ooo--...

Yaxley stepped over the convulsing body of the Healer who had dared oppose his Master’s will. The woman wouldn’t die, though she would be haunted by the experience for the rest of her days. Killing Healers was a bad idea; you never knew when you would need one. While this team had killed more than a dozen of St. Mungo’s staff on this mission, none of those were the white robed healers.

The door to the Long Term Care ward was of course locked. A swish of his wand and the door opened to his hand. The senior Death Eater turned to his team. “Get in there. Get the

blood traitors our Lord wants and kill the rest. Don't harm a single hair on any of their heads. You have three minutes."

Yaxley watched as the six Death Eaters rushed through the door. He had to remain to keep the door open. No spell known to magic could open it from the inside, and the Long Care Ward had permanent anti apparition and portkey wards build into the it. This door was the only way in or out and had to be controlled. Yaxley didn't trust any of the others to do the job.

····ooo000ooo--...

They had made a mistake. Ron Weasley sat on his bunk in his locked room. They had made a mistake, locking him away, keeping him from his Hermione. They would pay. They would all pay. The supposed healers, the Aurors who brought him here. His parents and brothers who visited with pitying looks on their faces, and Potter. Potter would pay most of all. The second day he had been here, before they locked him away all alone, Ron had stolen a spoon. Over the last seven weeks Ron had rubbed the spoon against the stone walls every unobserved moment. Every night Ron had concentrated his magic onto the metal implement. It was now razor sharp and so infused with magic that it was much harder and stronger than the cheap metal it had originally been made of, and it obeyed him, almost like it was a living thing.

They had taken his wand. They had taken his Hermione. They thought they could break him. They were wrong. He was Ron Weasley. He was supposed to be the Head Boy. The Captain of the Gryffindor Quidditch Team. Holder of the Hogwarts Quidditch Cup. He was...

His inner monolog was interrupted by screaming outside his locked door. Not the regular screaming of the night, this was something new, daytime screaming. And shouts of "Crucio!" Ron smiled. They were making another mistake. Open the door! He commanded telepathically. Open the door, I want to come out to show you your mistake.

Almost like an answer to his mental commands, the door unlocked and began to open.

····ooo000ooo--...

How had this happened? Ginny Weasley also sat on her bunk, her filthy hair hanging in her face. She hadn't bathed since she had been brought to this place. She had had everything. Harry, his love, his money. Everything.

Then Hermione Granger had taken it all away.

Under the mudblood's influence Harry had even taken up with a Slytherin slut. Why had Hermione done this to her? Ginny had always been her friend. Ginny had always shared what she had with Hermione. It was supposed to be Harry and Ginny, Ron and Hermione, One big happy Weasley family. They were supposed to live happily ever after, seeing old friends occasionally at Platform 9 ¾ when they sent their children off to Hogwarts.

But Hermione Granger had taken it all away.

Ginny never even looked up when the door to her cell opened.

“Stand up Blood Traitor!” the woman said, in a strangely accented voice.

That was odd. Usually the staff just called her “Miss Weasley” or “Ginny”. “Blood Traitor” was an unusual form of address... wasn’t it? Ginny didn’t really care. She ignored the instructions and remained sitting where she was, staring at the floor, attempting to understand just how she had lost it all.

···--ooo000ooo--...

Emilija Ulmanis was a fresh recruit to the Death Eaters, not yet a full year out of Durmstrang and was unaccustomed to being ignored when she gave an order while wearing the livery of her Dark Lord. Service to the Dark Lord was her path to greatness, but here on her first mission for her Dark Lord, this... This filthy Blood Traitor was ignoring her.

Emilija crossed the small cell to the smaller woman and jerked the red head to her feet. In doing so, Emilija had caused the smaller woman to collide with her quite painfully, and the hood to Emilija’s cloak had fallen down to expose her rather bushy brunette hair.

···--ooo000ooo--...

Patience, patience, patience. Ron told himself as the door to his cell opened. His hand made knife carefully hidden in his hand. The man at the door had said something, but Ron missed it, focusing his attention on what Hermione would do for him when he rescued her from Harry Potter and his Slytherin slut. It wasn’t until the man placed his hand on

Ron's shoulder that the youngest Weasley male remembered his own plan.

With all of his strength, Ron drove his sharpened spoon into the throat of the man in black robes.

Black robes? Since when did anyone in the hospital wear black robes? Ron pondered that as he stood over the convulsing body. Ooh, goodie! A wand. Ron bent over to pick up his newest weapon almost giggling, and in doing so for the first time noticed the bone white mask the man wore.

White mask? Not hospital people... Bad men, death... death... Death Eaters. He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named's people.

Instincts that predated his loss of sanity came to the fore. His new wand in hand, Ron Weasley used the cover of the room to plan his next move. From the open door he saw that a pair of the black robes had an older man in a hospital gown between them. Could he take them out without hurting the prisoner between them? He could. Harry had taught him. Harry had...

Ron felt the beginnings of his focus slipping away. Ignore everything else. Take the bastards down. Ron launched himself from the room, a complex curse chain erupting from his new wand

····ooo000ooo--...

Ginny looked up to see the face of the person manhandling her, but before she got to the face she saw the cow like udders and the bushy brunette hair.

“Granger!” she growled and immediately attacked with her bare hands.

Emilija Ulmanis was taken totally by surprise by the sudden physical attack, and the two women went to the floor with their fight. Ulmanis had the advantage of size and weight on her side. Ginny had the advantage of growing up with six older brothers and insane fury. Ulmanis never had a chance.

Emilija was pummeled until Ginny spotted her wand on the floor alongside the bleeding woman’s head. The youngest Weasley scooped the wand up. As soon as she touched it she knew it was a poor match, but it was good enough

“Reducto!” and the female Death Eater’s head disappeared into a fine mist.

It was only then Ginny realized what had happened. Why would Granger be in a Death Eaters outfit? Why would she wear a mask? She examined the wand in her hand. This wasn’t Hermione’s Vine wood with a dragon heartstring core. It was a much darker wood.

Ginny fought for focus. It was then she heard Ron’s voice calling out curse chains like when they were in the DA together.

Ron was cursing someone? Ron was in trouble! With a growl, she rushed into the ward to go to her older brother’s aid.

····ooo000ooo--...

Harry Potter was on his hands and knees panting like a dog. He shook his head and spat blood onto the floor of the room

of requirements. He and Neville had been in the midst of a practice duel, and whatever Neville had just hit him with had blown past Harry's shield like it wasn't there.

"Merlin on a crutch Neville, what the hell was that?" he said between gasps. "I feel like you worked me over with a beaters bat."

"Are you ok? I'm sorry Harry, that wasn't supposed to happen. Great Uncle Algie taught that to me after the meeting at Gran's house last week. It's something the Unspeakables came up with."

Harry rolled over to a sitting position, with his back against the wall, still gasping for breath. "Whatever it is, it's a good one."

"It's supposed to be a modified bludgeoner. Supposedly it sacrifices power for multiple impacts to disorient the opponent." Neville sat next to his friend. "Supposedly, it's supposed to make seven impacts. Are you sure you're ok?"

"I will be. That was NOT seven impacts, it was at least fifty, and each one was as strong as any normal bludgeoner I've ever felt." He held his ribs. "I think as soon as the universe stops spinning around, I'm going to need to see Madam Pomfrey."

"I'm so sorry Harry!"

"Don't be Nev, that was wicked. You're going to have to teach it to me. You know, I'm starting to think that Riddle was lucky he picked me to mark his equal."

“How can you say that?” Neville asked, confused by Harry’s words.

“Nev, buddy, you’re at least as strong as I am. Since your core finished filling after your blocks were removed, you’ve gotten quite a bit more powerful. The same level of power and everyone underestimates you. That’s sneaky. I know I wouldn’t want to face an angry Neville Longbottom in a fight. I mean, look what a slightly annoyed Neville did to me.”

“Maybe.” The blond boy thought for a minute. “But if he had marked me, I probably wouldn’t have gotten a cool lightning bolt scar; my luck doesn’t work that way. The bastard would probably stuck me with a lame-assed equals sign or something.”

“Ha!... ouch.” Harry winced again clutching at his ribs. “Oh, I see your plan Longbottom, first you break every bone in my body, and then you make me laugh so that you can enjoy my pain!” He again spat some blood onto the floor. “Yer evil. Did all those nasty things to me AND made me bite my tongue. Evil I tells ya!”

“Come on Harry; let’s get you to Madam Pomfrey’s tender mercies.” He assisted his friend to his feet and together the pair made their way to the Hospital Wing.

····ooo000ooo--...

What the hell was going on in there? Yaxley could hear screaming and the sound of spell fire inside the ward. If he entered to investigate, the door would close behind him and they would all be trapped. If he left the six recruits would be

trapped, and the Dark Lord would surely kill him for failing at his mission. What was he supposed to do?

His questions became moot as one of his team of Death Eaters came running from the door dodging spell fire as he did so. As the man crossed the threshold a blasting curse caught him in the left leg. The running death eater and his left leg spun into the far wall in opposite directions.

A tall redheaded man in a hospital gown followed the Death Eater through the door.

“Come on back Death Eater.” The man said. “How can I be a hero if you run away? If I’m not a hero Hermione won’t come back to me.”

Yaxley watched in horror as the lunatic lay curse after curse on the fallen Death Eater. It was time to end this.

“Avada Kedavra!” Yaxley spat and watched the lunatic fall dead atop his victim.

“You killed my brother.” Yaxley turned to see a girl in a hospital gown pointing a wand in his face. “You killed my brother! Reducto!”

Yaxley screamed when his right shoulder disintegrated. He fell to the ground writhing in pain.

“You killed my brother! REDUCTO!”

····ooo000ooo--...

Forinsic evidence showed that Ginny Weasley had used 23 Reductos on the Death Eater known only as Yaxley. It was generally believed that the man had lived through seven of them before finally dying.

···--ooo000ooo--...

A/N: Many thanks to rijlkent, fenriswolf001, mathiasgranger1 and the Great and Powerful Kinsfire for their help with the Harry/Neville fight scene.

Chapter Twenty – Endgame

As usual a parliament of owls made the morning mail delivery to the students in the Great Hall as they ate their breakfasts. Neville and Daphne both received their copies of the Daily Prophet, and immediately called Harry's attention to the attack at St. Mungos.

Harry and his wives scanned Daphne's copy while Neville read his own.

"Ron's dead." Hermione's voice sounded somehow empty.

"Damn." Harry took Hermione's hand under the table; she returned the squeeze with unexpected strength. "This has to end. I can't put it off any longer. Was anyone else hurt Neville?"

Neville scanned through the rest of the article, and paled.

"No." The young Wizard whispered. "No. It isn't fair. It just isn't fair."

Hermione found what Neville had seen, and pointed it out to Harry. Harry put his hand on his friend's shoulder.

"Nev, Mate..."

"Neville!" Hannah rushed to her boyfriend's side and pulled him into a hug. "I'm so sorry Neville, I'm so sorry."

"Oh look, someone killed a blood traitor loony at St Mungos" a loud clear voice came from the Slytherin table. "Ooh, they pruned one of the Longbottom Vegetables too."

“Shut up Parkinson!” Daphne spat. “Show some humanity for once in your pathetic life.”

The Great Hall suddenly went very quiet. “What’s wrong Daphne? Are you worried about your little friend? Buck up Longbottom, now you’ll only have to spend half as much time watering your vegetables.” The Slytherin table erupted into laughter. “That’s why you got into Herbology in the first place isn’t it Longbottom, so that you could tend to vegetables?”

“I’m warning you Parkinson, stop it now or you won’t appreciate what I do.” Neville said, not taking his eyes off the news paper that announced the death of his father in such an off hand manner, in the last paragraph of the story.

“And what are you warning me about Longbottom, you pathetic squib? What are you going to do? Weed me? Plow my fields? What’s wrong? Does Abbott just lay there like your mother?”

Neville Longbottom stood and drew his wand in a single fluid motion. “Accio Parkinson!”

Pansy Parkinson quit laughing at her own wit when she found herself dragged across three tables to Neville Longbottom’s waiting hand. Neville took her by the throat and lifted her to her feet. “Perhaps you haven’t heard that my magic and I are getting along much better these days. Are you ready to die Parkinson?”

The staff table shook its collective self free of the shock of the exchange they had just witnessed and began to respond, as usual too late.

“Let her go Mr. Longbottom.” Minerva McGonagall called from the staff table.

“Please stay out of this Professor. You sat there listening to her digging her grave and never said a thing. Not one word from any of the Staff. You all forfeited any right to speak now. This is now Family Business. This junior Death Eater has allowed her mouth to write a draft her wand can’t cash.” Neville returned his attention to the struggling woman. “You didn’t insult little Neville Longbottom this time Pansy, you insulted Longbottom of Longbottom, and maligned the woman I love and my family. With the death of my father, I am now the Head of The Ancient and Noble House of Longbottom, and as such I am declaring Blood Feud between the House of Longbottom and the House of Parkinson.” A gasp rippled through the Great Hall as the Purebloods realized what had just happened. Neville’s eyes never left Pansy’s “You didn’t answer my question Parkinson. Are you ready to die?”

“Mr. Longbottom!” The Headmaster stood.

“You stay out of this as well Headmaster. You created this situation. You let Snape coddle the Slytherins until they expect to be able to laugh at someone losing a parent. No more!” Neville waved his wand and incanted silently. The left arm Pansy’s robes fell to shreds to the floor showing her bare and tattooed left arm. “Oh look at that Pansy, the Dark Mark. Who did you kill to earn that I wonder? I guess you wanted to take Draco’s position as the stupidest bint in the

school. Guess what Pansy? You aren't a child who can hide behind the Headmaster and his pet Death Eater anymore. You're an adult, and you insulted an Ancient and Noble House, with all that entails. Perhaps I'll flay the skin from your body. Of course, I'll be sending your head to your father so that he will know the House of Longbottom is coming for him unless he deals with you properly."

Pansy was struggling in Neville's grip. "The Dark Lord..."

"Will die. Do you understand that Pansy? Harry is going to kill the bastard and I'm going to help him. But first, I'll be killing you."

Harry stood and placed his hand on Neville's shoulder. "Nev, please, don't kill her. Not yet. I need her."

Neville's grip tightened on Pansy's throat, while she struggled. "You need her?"

"This has gone on too long Neville." Daphne said. "Harry has to get a message to Riddle to end this. Parkinson there will be the messenger. This won't affect your Blood Feud, just delay it."

Neville's rage dimmed, just a little. He shoved the flailing girl toward Harry. "Take her, do what you want. Next time I see her, she dies."

"Slave, go to your master." Harry fixed the Slytherin girl with a stare. "Go to your master and tell him I expect him to be at the Shrieking Shack at noon tomorrow. Tell the coward that I am going to finish this. Tell him I called him a coward and said that if he doesn't show up, I'll come looking for him."

When I find him his humiliation will be complete.” Harry allowed his magic to flare in his eyes, a silly parlor trick that served no purpose but Daphne and Hermione both said was creepy as hell “Now, go, before Neville decides that any one of the Death Nibblers can deliver my message and kills you.”

Pansy Parkinson now had but a single thought, report to her master. Potter, Longbottom and the rest of the blood traitors would pay for this! Her robes in tatters, she ran from the Great Hall to the Entrance Hall exiting the castle, and running to the edge of the wards to apparate away.

····ooo000ooo--...

The Great Hall exploded into chaos. The thought that the Dark Lord would be as close as the Shrieking Shack unnerved most of the student body. The staff struggled ineffectively to restore order as a majority of the students fell into abject terror. From the staff table, Dumbledore noted the exceptions to the panic were Potter and his inner circle, and members of Potter’s old Defense Association. Dumbledore knew he needed to restore order to the school. He stood and drew his wand.

A pair of cannon blasts filled that air of the Great Hall. The students quieted, though their fear and panic remained.

“Prefects! Escort your housemates back to your dormitories. Classes are canceled for today and tomorrow. All students are confined to their dormitories until further notice. Meals will be served in your common rooms. Mr. Potter, my office. NOW!” The Headmaster turned and stalked out of the Great Hall.

Harry turned to his wives. "Hermione, check on Neville. Get him and Hannah to our suite. They don't need to be separated today."

Hermione kissed Harry quickly, and then ran off to do as he asked.

"Daphne, send the owls to Amelia Bones, the Unspeakables, and everyone else you think needs to know."

"Right Harry." She kissed him as well, and then left.

"I believe the Headmaster directed you to go to his office Mr. Potter." Harry turned to find Minerva McGonagall glaring at him. "I believe you should be doing that rather than making public displays of affection with your wives."

"And I believe that I don't much care what the Headmaster directs me to do Professor. He isn't in charge any more; I'm not his obedient little weapon. He lost all chance of that when he gave the Weasleys the first doses of the potions they used on Hermione and me."

The lack of instant obedience flustered the transfiguration Professor. "The Headmaster has explained to my satisfaction why he did those things..."

"Oh, did he?" the way she blithely accepted the old man's lies and manipulations infuriated Harry. "Was it sufficiently to your satisfaction that you would subject yourself to it? If the Headmaster suddenly took it into his head that the way to defeat Voldemort would require you to bed and marry Mr. Filch, would you willingly do it, or accept the potions that would allow you to think it was a good idea?"

“That is hardly the same thing Mr. Potter” McGonagall hissed, her eyes slits of anger.

“Why? Because it happens to you?” Harry shook his head sadly “What if he did to you what he did to Hermione? Sold you to another as a reward for their assistance, and dosed you with potions so you would beg to be raped?”

Seeing that McGonagall was not responding, Harry continued. “Neville was right. You see what’s happening and do nothing. You are supposedly the Deputy Headmistress, why have you allowed the school to become what it is today? You heard what Parkinson was saying to Neville, you could see what it was doing to him. When did you react? You did nothing until HE reacted in righteous anger. What the hell is wrong with you?”

Harry again waited for her response, she had none. “Where were you when Snape was bullying and raping children? Where were you when the halls of this school became unsafe due to the Pureblood attitudes encouraged in Slytherin house?” Where were you when Hermione and I, both of us from your own House, were dosed with potions and raped? Where were you when everything that has happened over the last seven years happened?”

Harry struggled to calm himself. “Has there ever been any explanation from Albus Dumbledore that you did not accept without critical thought? You were my Head of House; do you remember what you said at our orientation? You said “I am your advocate at this school. If you have concerns or problems bring them to me. That’s what you said. It didn’t take me long to learn that going to you with problems served

no purpose at all, but I kept trying, hoping against hope that you would change, but you didn't. Not first year with the stone, not second year with the Chamber, not third year with Sirius, not fourth year with the tournament, and not fifth year with Umbridge." He raised his right hand displaying the words 'I will not tell lies' carved into the back of his hand. "She used a fucking blood quill on me and so many others. WHERE WERE YOU?"

Minerva McGonagall took a step backwards when faced by his anger.

"No Professor, I don't trust you, I don't need you, and I don't take your orders. Feel free to expel me. I will report to the Headmasters office at a time of MY choosing. Fair warning Professor, as soon as I am done with Riddle, I am going to destroy Albus Dumbledore, and no one in this world will be able to stop me." The young man turned on his heel and strode away; he stopped at the door, hesitated, then turned back to the stunned woman.

"Professor, the Headmaster may have explained himself to your satisfaction, but he has not and cannot explain himself to mine." He looked away from the expressionless woman. "After Riddle is dealt with, I would appreciate it if you made sure that neither you nor anyone else is between the Headmaster and me. I would truly hate to hurt someone when I present him with what he so richly deserves."

And he was gone. Minerva slumped against the table. What had she done?

···--ooo000ooo--...

“I told you I wanted to see you over two hours ago Mr. Potter.”

“I’m sorry Headmaster; I had some important things to take care of before I could waste time with you.”

The old man looked over his eyeglasses at Harry. “Feeling a bit full of yourself aren’t you Mr. Potter.”

“You have no idea Headmaster. What was it you wanted?”

“I would like to know what you were thinking challenging Voldemort like that.”

Harry shrugged. “I thought I was fairly clear. I’m finishing what he started back in ’81. The only thing waiting does is allow him to kill more people.”

“And how do you propose to do this?”

“Why should I tell you? So that you can let him know my plans as part of some nebulous ‘Greater Good’? I don’t think so Headmaster. I’m playing this in the Albus Dumbledore mode, telling no one anything remotely useful, and lying whenever I feel like it.” Harry smiled. “Let’s see how you like it.”

···--ooo000ooo--...

What was left of Pansy Parkinson’s body was still smoking from the spell the Tom Riddle had used to punish her for daring to bring him Potter’s insults. So Potter was calling him a coward was he? Riddle calmed himself. It seemed every time he lost his temper he further depleted his forces

Riddle took the arm of the closest Death Eater and signaled for all of his remaining people to return to him. Potter was going to get what he asked for.

...--ooo000ooo--...

Lying back on the bed, Hannah ran her nails through the fine hairs on Neville's chest, while nuzzling his neck. They were in Harry's room in the suite the married trio shared. Savoring the afterglow, Hannah looked about the room.

"It's so clean in here. I don't know why that surprises me, but it does."

"Harry's always been neat. I think it has something to do with how he was raised. He doesn't talk about it, but I don't think he was very happy there."

Deciding that Neville was more interesting than the cleanliness of the room or the history of Harry Potter, Hannah returned her attention to his neck, teasing him until she felt him starting to rebound from their earlier efforts. Neville's left hand went to her breasts, lightly teasing her nipples.

"Hannah, will you marry me?"

"What?" Hannah sat up and looked down into his eyes, her long blonde hair framing her face, which held a look of total shock.

"I asked you to marry me." He offered a hesitant smile.

“But you’re... you’re a Lord.”

“I’m Neville. That’s all, just Neville. All that Longbottom of Longbottom crap is for other people. Neville wants to marry Hannah. Neville asked Hannah. What does Hannah say?”

“I’ve not sure that your Grandmother really approves of me, I mean we spoke a bit after you were hurt, but we haven’t really spoken all that much.”

“It’s a good thing you’d be marrying me then. If it really bothers you, she’ll be at the wedding. You can have a long talk after the ceremony, but before the honeymoon. I’ll warn you though, she’s pretty scary.”

“I haven’t said yes.” She dimpled.

“Now’s your chance“ He looked up into her eyes. “I’ve checked, no outstanding marriage contracts, I’d be all yours.”

“Yes.” She whispered. “I’ll marry you.”

“Well, get down here then.”

...--ooo000ooo--...

Hermione crept into Daphne’s room, she found her sister wife lying with their husband. Harry was sleeping in Daphne’s arms.

“I was wondering if you were actually going to come in.”

“Like you said earlier, if the plan doesn’t work, this could be our last chance” Hermione whispered, she shrugged out of her robe and slid between the sheets next to Harry, cuddling up against him. She reached across his body and took Daphne’s hand in hers.

“Thank you for sharing him tonight. I didn’t want to sleep alone.” Hermione sighed. “Harry’s plan is a good one, and magic is just restrictive enough for it to work, but we could still lose him, if not to Riddle, then to Dumbledore.”

“I know.” Daphne responded, also in a whisper. “I did something tonight that will probably make Harry angry.” She looked deeply into Hermione’s eyes. “I took a fertility potion. I don’t know for sure, but I think he’s put his baby in me.”

“So if we lose him, we keep a part of him?” Daphne was right, Harry probably would be a bit angry, but he’d get over it. “Thank you Daphne, I wish I had thought of that.”

····ooo000ooo--...

Harry work slowly feeling warm and safe. He was laying on his right side, with his left hand cupping a breast. That was odd, he thought sleepily. Daphne usually takes the left side of the bed. We must have rolled over together in our sleep.

Harry rolled the nipple of the breast he was holding between his thumb and forefinger, and sought out the spot on Daphne’s neck that she loved to have nibbled, when he was startled by the mass of hair he had just pushed his face into. A bushy mass of hair. He opened his eyes and was confronted by a brunette mop. Hermione rolled over to face him and snuggled in closer.

“Morning.” She said in a drowsy tone.

Behind him, Harry felt another body roll against him. A pair of breasts pushed against his back and a slender arm crossed over his body and reached down to take hold of his penis.

“I think we surprised him Hermione.”

“Yeah.” The brunette lightly bit her husband’s chest. “This is much better than my idea Daphne, thank you for sharing.”

“Not at all” Harry heard the Raven haired beauty stroking him say. “But don’t sell your idea short. Throwing him onto the ground, ripping his clothes off and having our way with him has merit. We’ll save that for a morning when we don’t have to get ready for a noon appointment.”

“What’s going on?” Harry asked, hoping with all his might that he wasn’t going to wake up from this dream.

“Neither of us wanted to be alone last night Harry.” Daphne cooed in his ear.

“But you shouldn’t get used to this.” Hermione said. “We both enjoy our alone time with you too much.”

“We’ve got to get ready for your noon appointment, so we don’t have a lot of time.” Daphne said.

“There is only enough for about three orgasms.” Hermione suggested, rolling him onto his back and herself on top of him.

“Well, two anyway, if you get to work and do your job properly, we might find a way to work yours in Harry.” Daphne said as Hermione took him inside of her body. Then Daphne kissed him, and Harry lost himself to the lovemaking when their tongues found each other.

····ooo000ooo--...

The Dark Lord Voldemort and all of his remaining Death Eaters, numbering an even three dozen, apparated to the Shrieking Shack just outside the town of Hogsmeade. He was somewhat surprised when he found his apparition being guided to a specific location by wards of a type he was completely unfamiliar with. Upon materializing he found himself before a large ornate table of the type contracts were dealt with at Gringotts. He could sense that all of his Death Eaters had arrived directly behind him clustered in a single group.

“11:45. you’re early Tom. Well done.”

Sitting at the table was Harry Potter, two women who fit the descriptions of his wives, a Goblin and Amelia Bones. Standing behind Potter’s chair was another young Wizard and a young Witch. The young Wizard appeared to be the Longbottom whelp. Potter, Longbottom and all the witches were in ornate formal robes. Potter continued to speak.

“We might as well get started since you are here, unless you have any objection Tom?”

“I am Lord Voldemort! Do not use that disgusting Muggle name when addressing me Potter.”

“You are no ‘lord’ Tom, had you applied yourself you might have qualified for the old Gaunt seat, but you did not and you died. Your current homunculus form isn’t qualified to hold the title. But if you want to be formal, you may address me as your Lord Black.” And Potter’s aura flashed blue for a fraction of a second.

Enraged, Riddle whipped out his wand “CRUCIO!” he screamed... and nothing happened. Riddle could hear the confused murmurs from his Death Eaters.

“ Really Tom, aren’t you a touch old for such childish displays of anger?”

“What have you done to my magic Potter?”

“I haven’t done a thing Tom. You did it. And as I said, I am Lord Black.” He smiled again. “Forget my title again and I will have to punish you.”

Potter was nudged by the woman to his right. “Ah yes, we must conform to the proper comportment. Introductions are in order I suppose. To my right is my wife, your Lady Black. To my left is my wife, the Lady Potter. To the left of Lady Potter is Madam Bones of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement and to the right of Lady Black is First Assistant Bank Manager Lockthorn. Behind me is Lord Longbottom my advisor and his fiancée Miss Abbott.

“What is all this about Potter? Why have you staged all this? What have you done to me?”

“Lockthorn, if you would?”

The Goblin opened the sealed case and withdrew a thick sheaf of parchment. "This document was sworn before me on the 23rd of Obsidian in the year 2907 cge or in human terms 15 April 1952 ce. It is a contract of Fealty to accompany the Fealty Oath sworn to Orion Mordecai Black by Thomas Marvolo Riddle. The Oath of Fealty was given in exchange for a sum of 3000 galleons, and is sealed in the blood of both parties."

"What has that to do with anything Potter? So I swore an Oath of Fealty to Orion Black. He's dead."

"You misunderstand Mr. Riddle." The Goblin said. "You did not swear fealty to Orion Black, you swore fealty to the Lord Black. Your obligation was passed to his heir, the current Lord Black."

Riddle realized what was happening, and understood that he was trapped by his own magic. He couldn't attack Potter, but he could..."

"I see the wheels turning in your head Tom." Harry frowned. "Each and every person at this table is under my protection, an attack on any of them would be the same as an attack on my person. You may kneel"

Riddle fought against it with all his might when his own magic forced him to his knees.

The Goblin continued "the Oath sworn before and to Lord Orion Black is as follows: 'I, Thomas Marvolo Riddle swear on my honor, my magic, and my life that I will in the future be faithful to the Lord Black, never cause him or his harm and

will observe my homage to him completely against all persons in good faith and without deceit for all of my days.”

Harry stood from the table. “I, the Lord Black, after consultation with the Lady Black, and Neville Longbottom a pureblood in good standing in accordance with the family rules pass this judgment against Thomas Marvolo Riddle, a vassal of the house of Black. You were in abeyance of your oath to the Lord Black when you took members of the House of Black as vassals of your own and marked them like barnyard animals with your ‘dark mark’. You were in abeyance of your oath when one of your vassals caused the death of the heir of the House of Black, one Sirius Black. I judge that you have broken your oath.”

Harry sat back down. “Tom, you pledged your honor, your magic and your life to the Lord Black. Your violation of the oath requires I remove from you one of the items you pledged. From what I have seen, you have no honor, and I don’t want your life. For violating your oath to the House of Black, I demand your magic. So Mote It!”

The parchment tore its self free Lockthorn’s hands and shredded itself. Riddle’s magical core ruptured and leaped from his body to the shredded contract. It was then that the assembled Death Eaters fell to the ground screaming.

Hermione leaned over to Amelia Bones. “We thought this might happen. The Death Eater’s magic and life force are tied to Riddle through their Dark Marks. His magic has been ripped away, theirs is being sent to him only to be taken by the contract.”

“And since his body is a magical construct” Amelia nodded her understanding, “When his and their magic is completely

depleted he will start taking their life force in an attempt to survive.”

“A futile attempt, but yes.”

“So they’re all going to die?”

“Yes.”

It took nine horrible minutes for the last of the Death Eaters to die, screaming, and another two minutes for Riddle’s conjured body to fade to nothing, leaving only a small puddle of slime.

Harry stood. “Thank you everyone. Lockthorn?”

“Yes Lord Black?”

“Thank you for your services today. Have you calculated your fee?”

“Yes Lord Black, I will have the invoice for you in a moment.”

“Triple it.”

“Thank you Lord Black.”

Harry gathered his wives into a hug. “It’s over. It’s really over.”

Neville clapped him on the back.

“It’s almost over” Daphne whispered.

“One more and we’re free.” Hermione agreed.

····ooo000ooo--...

All around the area dozens of people dropped their Disillusionment Charms and reappeared. The Aurors among them began tending to the fallen Death Eaters, a pair of unspeakable collected what was left of Tom Riddle. Minerva McGonagall and Filius Flitwick approached their students.

At Harry’s signal, Lockthorn collapsed the Goblin wards that had so confused Riddle, submitted his invoice, accepted payment and apparated away.

“I cannot believe how you defeated him Harry!” Flitwick said. Most Wizards, myself included would have just attempted to fight him, wand to wand, and would have lost spectacularly. Well done my boy, well done.”

“Thank you Professor.” Harry lowered his voice. “What we spoke about earlier Professor, if I need you, will you be able to help?”

“Yes. A reckoning is long overdue. My wand is yours.”

“ Thank you Professor.” Harry turned to his wives. “Hermione? Are you ready?”

“Yes Harry.”

Albus Dumbledore appeared with a loud crack. “Harry my boy; I am overjoyed to see the success of our plan.”

“Our plan Headmaster? What did you have to do with the plan other than demanding that I not attempt it or anything else?”

“Harry now isn’t the time for your jokes.” He dropped his voice into a low murmur. “Harry too many people are listening, we must present a united front here.”

“I don’t think so Headmaster. Madam Bones, I believe you wanted to speak with the Headmaster?”

“In deed I do. Albus Dumbledore, I am here to serve a warrant for your arrest.”

“Might I ask the charge?” The old man had his benevolent grandfather act going strong.

“ Kidnapping, misappropriation of funds, misuse of proscribed potions, facilitating rape, and many others. Surrender your wand.”

“I think not Amelia. I believe I will be leaving now, please don’t call your Aurors, I do not wish to harm them.”

Lord Potter, Lord Longbottom, I hereby deputized you. Arrest Professor Dumbledore.”

The Headmaster smiled widely. “Boys, you’ve both made huge leaps in your levels of power this year, but you are no match for me.” The ancient Wizard cast a wide area stunner which both of the younger Wizards shielded easily.

Filius Flitwick noticed that Hermione Granger was well away from the crowd, behind the Headmaster, and she had her

wand out, thinking that odd, he watched as she did a wand motion he had taught her, though the incantation he could read on her lips was off slightly. Filius watched as the charm she cast arced to the Headmaster unnoticed. A smile slowly crept across his lips as he realized what she had done. Brilliant.

The Charms Master drew his own wand and cast a precision cutter into the battle. The tight charm pattern sliced into the Headmaster's beard and severed it completely just under the old man's chin.

Dumbledore was startled at the attack from an unguarded direction. "Et tu Filius?"

"In deed Albus." The small man's wand spit out a complex curse chain, forcing Dumbledore to stagger into a curse from the Longbottom boy. "I find what you have become to be quite distasteful. Surrender now, before you get hurt."

"All of you together cannot stop me." The ancient Wizard panted. "I am Albus Dumbledore, the defeater of Grindelwald, the greatest living Wizard." What was wrong? Had it been so long that such a short session would have him so breathless? A Bludgeoning curse from Longbottom shattered his shield, a blasting curse from Potter sprayed him with gravel, a light burst charm from Flitwick had him blinking to dispel the spots before his eyes, and he couldn't catch his breath. He could no longer hear his opponents; they were drowned out by the sound of his blood rushing in his ears. What was wrong? His vision lost color, everything was grey.

“Stand down Neville, he’s done” Harry said as he watched his former Headmaster stumble for a third time, then fall to his knees and slump to the ground.

The Aurors rushed forward. “Get the inhibitors on him fast, we need to dispel the bubblehead charm.” Hermione Granger said as she ran to her husband.”

“ Bubblehead charm? Why would he have cast a Bubblehead charm?”

“He didn’t.” Harry said. “Albus Dumbledore was defeated by Hermione Granger; SHE cast the Bubblehead Charm on him.”

“A modified Bubblehead to be exact.” Filius Flitwick was practically jumping up and down in his excitement. “She changed the properties so that it contained the carbon dioxide within the bubble. Well done Ms Granger, work well beyond N.E.W.T. level.”

Hermione blushed happily. “Thank you Professor.”

···--ooo000ooo--...

The British Wizarding Society reacted to the news that Voldemort was truly gone in much the same manner the reacted to the end of the first war. Celebrations went on for a week. Weasley’s Wizarding Wheezes made five years worth of sales in three days. The twins ended the official period of celebration exhausted and very rich. Then the clean up began.

The Trial of Albus Dumbledore was quick even by the standards of the British Wizards. This was mostly because Dumbledore freely admitted to each of the charges and attempted to explain that what he had done was all for the greater good. In recognition of everything he had achieved in his long life Dumbledore was sentenced lightly, only five years. He survived three when his aged body, hampered by the inhibiting of his magic, simply gave out.

As far as anyone could tell, every marked Death Eater died with their master. Sympathizers were 'encouraged' to go away. There was something of an exodus of those who supported the Pure Blood Agenda. Not all the encouragement was strictly legal; to suggest that old scores were settled would be somewhat optimistic.

On August 9th 1998, Michael James Black was born. Dark haired with blue eyes, he looked into his father's eyes not three minutes after he was born and grasped the large finger his father offered, Michael was quickly stolen away by his other mother who couldn't stop crying she was so happy. This scene in the delivery room was repeated with the same adults several more times over the next few years.

····ooo000ooo--...

Nineteen Years later:

Master Healer Agnes Menos shook her head sadly as she observed her patient. Ginevra Weasley sat slowly rocking on her bed in the private room that had been her world for almost two decades. Potion induced madness was a rare affliction; Menos had authored many papers on this still young woman. At some point along the last nineteen years she had become... attached.

Menos reviewed Ginevra Weasley's chart. Arthur Weasley was due any time now. He never missed a day, always arriving for the evening meal to lovingly feed his only daughter. Occasionally, so very occasionally she would come out of the world her damaged mind had constructed for her when he was there, and for a few moments she was fifteen again, and Arthur's heart would soar... until her connection to reality faded and she was once again lost to him.

Her five brothers would visit at least once a week. How much this woman meant to her family was displayed in the fact that each of the Weasley men had a daughter named Ginny. The brothers would come by with their wives and whatever family members available. The Weasley Twins on the other hand were always together. The twins were infamous at St. Mungos for what they did following a visit with their sister. Without fail they would make their way to the children's ward (sneaking in if they were there outside of visiting hours) and distribute samples of their wares. This was officially frowned upon, but it was hard to ignore the laughter on the ward following one of their visits.

Molly Weasley hadn't been seen on the ward since that horrible day when the Death Eaters attacked and the youngest Weasley son had been murdered protecting the other patients on the ward. Menos shuddered at that thought. She still had occasional bouts of palsy from the Cruciatus curse exposure she had received that day.

"How is she?" a soft voice asked at Menos' shoulder startling the Healer.

Menos turned to find Ginevra Weasley's other frequent visitors, Luna Finch-Fletchley and Hermione Granger, the Lady Potter standing beside her.

“No change Luna. She hasn't been aware of her surroundings for 34 days.”

“I was hoping the Muggle pharmaceuticals would help.” The brunette woman said sadly.

“They may have Hermione, we can't tell yet. Ginny has had significantly longer periods than this before. There are many realities where she recovers.” The grey-eyed blond said. “The Legilimancers who have examined her say that she's at least happy in her mind.”

Hermione sighed. “There are worse things I suppose.” Her necklace chimed. “Arthur's just entered the building. I had best leave; you know how he gets when he sees me or Harry, no matter how many times we tell him he has nothing to apologize for. Thank you Healer Menos, thank you for taking care of our friend.”

“Mind if I walk you out Hermione?”

“Not at all Luna.”

The two old friends made their way off the ward the back way to ensure that they did not run into Arthur Weasley, it wasn't until they emerged onto the London street that they restarted their conversation.

“Will you be able to make it to Lawrence’s birthday party?” Luna asked. “He wants to see all of you. Especially Lily and Gary.”

“We’ll be there. Lily would scream bloody murder if we missed it. Besides, I want to see the look on my son’s face when Lawrence waves that Head-boy badge in his face.” Hermione laughed. “You know Gary actually laughed when I told him revision for his O.W.L.s was important, and that eleven Os and an E in Astronomy most certainly was NOT ‘good enough’.” Her smile hid the personal disappointment that Gary hadn’t gotten the job she had coveted. She knew that her first born really didn’t care about the job title and was happy that it had gone to his friend, who did want it. Shaking her head as if to clear it of that thought, Hermione asked the question she had been wondering about for almost two decades. “Did you see this all the way back when you gave Harry that book?”

“I saw that one of the multitudes of possibilities resulted in my son Lawrence being born, yes. Did I see him dating Harry and Daphne’s daughter? No.” the blonde smiled. “Life plays games with us all, even former seers.”

“Do you ever miss it?”

“No, not really. I lost contact with the multiverse three days before I turned thirty two, then I could quit worrying about the rest of the universe and give my complete attention to the here and now.

“Well, Daphne is deliriously happy with Lily and Lawrence dating... Though I think she thinks that they’ll be doing more

than that. She's already picking out the fabric for her gown for the wedding."

"They're a bit young for that" Luna sniffed, ignoring the minor detail that the two children in question were the same age she and Justin had been when he proposed. "Speaking of Daphne, I saw her last week; she hasn't seemed to have lost the weight from her last pregnancy yet. It's been two years, but that seemed unusual for her."

"She did lose the weight." Hermione smiled brightly. "She made it all back to her size twos. Damn her."

"But she was... Again?"

"Yep. I call her Mrs. Weasley when I want to get a rise out of her. Both she and Harry are over the moon. Me too, I get more babies to spoil without going through labor."

"That's eleven. She's certainly dedicated to her 'secret plan'."

"No, twelve. Twin girls."

It was Luna's turn to shake her head. "Three sets of twins. It would serve her right if this latest one takes after their uncles Gred and Forge. I never would have imagined Daphne Greengrass as the Earth Mother type."

"She loves babies, and she loves making them with Harry. She told me last night that she doesn't intend to stop anytime soon, and wants me to have another. I told her that three was plenty for me."

“Even I never saw that coming.” Luna smiled, laughing at her self, just a little bit. “Well, Harry always wanted a family.”

“That and to just be Harry.” The Brunette smiled as well. “And he is.”

--Fin--

...--ooo000ooo--...

A/N: Many thanks to grandeparadox, Harold Ancell, Swordchucks, Nimbus225, Lordmasterwar, Foz Tacicus, rhianona, Tommy King, Ted Carroll, fenriswolf001, and Red Jacobson for their help with Neville's star turn, as well as canoncansodoff, Ronnie McMains II, Tommy King, rhianona, Arawn Kieve, Harold Ancell and the Great and Powerful Kinsfire for their help with Harry's confrontation with McGonagall. And perhaps most especially thanks to BenRG for his suggestion that the whole '19 years later' epilog was just a product of Ginny's damaged mind...

A/N the last: Well it's been fun. Nine months, something like 77600 words, 258201 hits and 924 reviews as of Chapter 19. Thanks for reading.

A/N Even after that: It has been suggested that my use of the Epilogue from canon in the "19 years later" section constituted a copyright violation. I disagree, seeing it as being covered under the Fair Use Doctrine as a satire. That being said, why fight over it? It was a one note joke not important to the plot. Thanks for reading.